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DOWN BY THE RIVER SIDE.

BY GEORGE P. MORRIS.

I.

Down by the river side I stray
As twilight shadows close,
And the soft music of the spray
Lulls nature to repose:
Beside the stream a maiden dwells—
My star of eventide!—
Pure as the water lily-bells
Down by the river side.

II.

Down by the river side I own
A treasure worth the sea,
In one, to all the world unknown,
Who's all the world to me.
Soon, in her early bloom and glow,
She is to be my bride,
Where the sweet water-lilies grow
Down by the river side.

◆

SILVERTHORNE;

OR,

THE HEIRS OF CHESWOLD MANOR.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

CHAPTER I.

IN THE DARK VALLEY.

Upon one of the most romantic stretches of the coast of Lancashire was located the broad, rich manor of Cheswold. The house, a structure of the time of the fifth or sixth Henry, was a large, cumbersome building, the walls and turrets being of a hard, red sandstone; while some of the porches and oriels, which were of a more recent date, were of wood. A wide park, in some parts covered with great old trees, surrounded the manor house, beyond which was a high, thick wall, that must once have been a strong barrier against the incursions of rogues or enemies; but of late years the ponderous oaken gates, with their bolts and bars, had been removed, and lighter and more graceful structures hung in their places. This house, with its outbuildings, and its park, was upon a broad eminence, overlooking the blue waters of the Irish Sea; the beach, upon which dashed the rolling waves, being separated from the western wall only by an elevated roadway. To the northward this eminence sloped down to a beautiful valley, through which ran quite a stream, and upon the soil of which Cheswold depended for most of its agricultural fruits. To the eastward swept away a thick forest; while to the southward was another vale, dotted here and there with peasants' cots, and with the road to Ormskirk running through it.

Towards the middle of the afternoon of a pleasant summer's day, a horseman, attended by a single servant, rode up to the manor house, and dismounted upon the shelving turf in front of the main entrance. His directions to his companion, and the greetings which he received from those who came out to wait upon him, indicated that he was no less a personage than the master of the place; and such, in fact, he was—SIR EDWARD STANTON, one of the wealthiest and most honored baronets of the realm. He was yet in the prime of life, not over five-and-forty years of age; with a stout, well knit frame; and bearing himself with a calm, conciliating dignity, in which was little pride, save such as every honorable man may justly feel. The outline of his form betrayed a little inclination to corpulency, though not enough to detract at all from the symmetry of good proportion. His head, with its broad, high brow, was bold and heavy, and the hair, which had once been of a pure rich brown, was now freely intermingled with touches of silver. These white hairs could not have been wholly the mark of time, for the vigor of manhood was yet apparently fresh upon him. No—they were the touches of the hand of a deep grief; and the same hand had drawn lines of correspondence upon his face, tracing the marks of care and sorrow about the finely formed mouth, and extending them up the cheeks to the deep-set, lustrous eyes.

As Sir Edward ascended to the piazza, he was met by a man who welcomed him home very warmly, and made many protestations of joy in view of his safe return; and still a close observer could have seen that the baronet did not reciprocate this greeting, with that impulsive, heartful warmth with which he had met his faithful servants. This individual, who is to be quite a prominent actor in our story, was named Owen Murdock. He was brother-in-law to Sir Edward, having married his only sister. He was about five years older than the baronet; of medium size; with a slight stoop in his frame when he stood at ease, which gave him the appearance of an undue length of limb. His head was small; his hair of a light brown, with some gray, sparse and thin; his forehead not very high nor very wide; and his features regular and fair-looking. Owen Murdock might have been, in his youth, a handsome man, as beauty goes with the world; and even now he was not without considerable personal comeliness; but, unfortunately for his beauty, he had an unpleasant expression about the eyes. They were of different sizes, and varied somewhat in the tone of their color; and then they had an indirect, crouching look at times, which was far from agreeable. Still, when he was in animated conversation, upon some genial topic, and the surroundings were all of a pleasant social character, he could make himself very agreeable and entertaining, and command the attention of an intellectual audience. In his younger days, when he married Adelaide Stanton, he had done something as an attorney; but his wife died after they had been married a few years, leaving one child—a boy; and since then he had done little or nothing in the way of business, living part of the time upon what little property he possessed, and for the rest of the time quartering himself upon the bounty of his brother-in-law.

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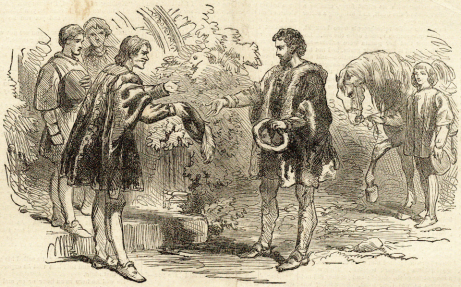

THE WELCOME HOME.

"Upon my soul," said Owen, after they had entered the house, "you look better than you did when you went away. Your journey has improved you."

"I hope it has," returned the baronet; "for surely I need improving."

"Pshaw!" cried Owen, with a snap of the finger; "I wish I was as stout and strong as you are."

Sir Edward regarded his brother-in-law for some moments in silence; and it was evident enough that he was trying to conceal his real thoughts and feelings. Presently he said:

"I have seen an old friend since I have been gone."

"Ah—who was it?"

"Do you remember Silverthorne?"

"SILVERTHORNE?" repeated Owen, thoughtfully. "Why, yes. He used to occupy the little cot and shop by the river. You mean the old boat-builder?"

"The same," returned Sir Edward. "He is old now, though he was comparatively young when he left here."

"Aye," assented Owen. "Let's see—he left before my wife died. It must have been five-and-twenty years ago."

"Just about that," said the baronet. "He was then a stout young man of five-and-thirty; so he must now be full three score. I saw him in London; and I have offered him the old cot and shop again, if he will come back here."

"But," cried Murdock, "do you not, my dear Sir Edward, compromise your own dignity by thus bringing under your care and protection a transported felon?"

"How?" replied the baronet, with some severity. "Has he not duly suffered for his crime?"

"What of that, my dear brother? I know he has served out his term of transportation; but does that wash him of the stain? Is he not still the convicted felon?"

"And what was his felony?" retorted the baronet, with a bitter curl of the lip.

"He was a smuggler."

"Aye,—he helped to land and secrete contraband goods; and he may have sold some of them, and pocketed the proceeds."

"And," added Owen, "in the eyes of the law that constitutes smuggling."

"Well—I suppose it does."

"And do you not look upon smuggling as a crime?"

"Look ye, Owen Murdock," cried the baronet, in warm, impulsive tones, "when I judge my fellows, I judge them as men.—I judge them by what I know of their hearts and souls,—I judge them by the deeds they do to their fellows. I judge them by those qualities which I love or despise in man. There are brave, daring, true-hearted men upon our coast at this very hour, engaged in the smuggler's occupation; and there are also villains wearing the same garb. I detest a mean, cowardly villain, even though he wear the ermine of the court, or the gown of the bishop; and I honor and esteem the brave, generous, true-hearted man, though fortune may have thrown him upon the deck of the smuggler. Silverthorne was a noble fellow, and a brave one."

This speech had considerable effect upon Owen Murdock; but he finally managed to meet the gaze of his host again; and very modestly suggested:

"I remember that the fellow was brave and gallant; but may not the associations of villains and rascals, for so many years, have greatly corrupted him?"

"We'll see," returned Sir Edward. "He shall come back, if he will, and then we will watch him. I hope I shall find him worthy of the confidence I place in him. If he can betray the confidence of a friend, he must be a villain, indeed."

Again Owen winced, and was forced to turn away his head. There was something in the tone of the baronet's voice—something in the words spoken—and something in the look he bestowed upon his brother-in-law, that reached a very unprotected spot in that individual's soul.

"Well, well," said Owen, trying to smile, "I hope he may prove true and trustworthy."

"So do I," returned Sir Edward. "And now," he added, rising from his chair, "where is Lorinda? I must see her."

"She is at home, I suppose," replied Murdock. "She went over to Farworth yesterday, and I do not think she has returned. She is very anxious to see you."

"She has been well?"

"Yes."

With this Sir Edward left the room. At four o'clock his dinner was ready, and after he had partaken of the meal his attention was called to his horses, some new ones having arrived during his absence. So anxious was his groom that he should try them, that he spent nearly two hours in the saddle upon the exercising ground. The sun had set before he left the stables; but still he was bound to go over to Farworth Hall. It was dusk when his horse was brought to the door, and his groom suggested to him that he had better take company with him.

"For what?" asked the baronet.

"It's a dark road in the deep valley," replied the man; "and I have heard of robbers in such places."

"Did you ever hear of a robber between here and Farworth?"

"No, sir; but for all that there may be such a thing. There are plenty of smugglers on the coast; and I think I've seen 'em lurking about the woods."

"If they lurk in our woods, it is only to hide from the officers," replied the baronet. "No," he added, "I prefer to ride alone. If our Lady Lorinda needs any advice touching her grounds, I may remain all night; so you need not keep out of bed for me."

Thus speaking Sir Edward gathered up his rein and moved off through the park. He went out by the southern gate, and soon struck upon the valley road. In a little while he came to where the vale was deepest, the abrupt hillsides, covered with great trees, forming a long, curving gorge, through which ran the travelled way. It was very dark at this point, the tall, heavily-leaved oaks arching their branches overhead, thus shutting out even the feeble rays of the stars, and making it a complete vaulted passage for a distance of nearly two miles. In the daytime this pass was beautiful and grateful enough; but in the night it was drear and dismal.

As the baronet struck into this canopied gorge he drew his horse down to a walk, and leaned thoughtfully over his saddle-bow. A deep, stifled sigh, followed by a low moan, told that his reflections were in keeping with the gloom that surrounded him.

"Alas!" he murmured, in tones that mingled piteously and prayerfully with the sighing of the wind through the thick foliage, "and shall I never more see the light? Will the day never come again?"

Why so sad? Whence came the gloom?

Years ago, when he was young and hopeful, and the morning of life was opening with buds and blossoms, Sir Edward married a beautiful maiden, whom he loved with the whole strength and fervor of his generous soul. She was as pure and good as she was beautiful, and had bestowed upon him the undivided wealth of her virgin affections. A child was born to them—a bright, cherub boy—and their happiness seemed all that earth could afford. When their child was something over a year old, they went to France on a pleasure trip, and spent the warm summer months in travel. At Paris, as they were making preparations for the return, the baronet received a message requiring his immediate presence at home. There was no such thing, within the bounds of duty, as disobeying the summons; and as his wife, with her child, could not well make the necessary haste, he was forced to leave them behind, and go forward alone. But he left them in charge of his brother-in-law, and they were to follow him as soon as possible. A week afterwards, Lady Stanton and her child, in company with Owen Murdock, took passage at Cherbourg on board ship bound for Liverpool. Off Land's End they were overtaken by a severe storm, which increased in fury until they were completely at its mercy, and finally, in the thick darkness of night, the ship was thrown upon the coast of Cornwall, a shattered and sundered wreck. Some of the crew—a very few—were saved, but most, alas! were lost. Some of the bodies sank with heavier portions of the wreck; some were dashed and mangled against the rocks, and some were washed to the shore, stark and cold. Owen Murdock was helping the officers of the ship at the time of the disaster, and he was saved, being caught in a tattered sail, and thus, in a measure, shielded from the cruel rocks. Sir Edward had the melancholy satisfaction of receiving the bruised body of his wife, and giving it affectionate burial, but the corse of his son he never saw. Every effort was made to find it, but without avail. Other bodies found deep sepulchre within the submarine caverns of the rocks, and those who made the search were satisfied that the remains of the little one had found rest with them.

For this was Sir Edward sad. From that dreadful hour of wreck and death had come a gloom, settling down over his life like a pall, and pervading with its anguish his every avenue of feeling. Aye—and he had other causes of disquiet—causes of a more recent date—which, linked with those of the past, gave him to fear that the day of joy could never dawn again.

And so Sir Edward rode on, slowly, through the dark way, his mind busy with things he had never told, until finally the stopping of his horse called him from his reverie, and caused him to pay some attention to things about him. There was just the faintest glimmering of starbeams in the vale, and the baronet judged that he was about half way through the wood. He peered around, but could see nothing unusual.

"Come, Hunter," he said, patting his horse upon the neck, "there's nothing here to be afraid of. Come, come, you've travelled this road too much to fear the gloom."

But the beast was not inclined to advance, and when his rider urged him, he attempted to turn back. The baronet was now sure that there must be something in the way, for he knew the sagacity of his horse, and was confident that no mere freak could operate thus upon him. He was gazing around again, trying in vain to peer through the gloom, when he heard a sound like the crackling of a stick, and his horse tried once more to turn around, this time giving a sharp snort of fear. But the rider quickly brought him under control, and then bent his ear to listen. There was another sound of crackling sticks, and in a moment more a dark object darted into the road, and, as the horse reared and plunged, Sir Edward could see that a man had seized him by the bit. But the man who had done this was not alone, for, as the baronet bent forward for a pistol, he received a blow upon the head that brought him from his saddle.

When Sir Edward recovered his senses, which he did very quickly, for the blow had not completely stunned him, his hands had been bound, and two stout men were in the act of binding his feet. He struggled with all his might, but he could not prevent the work that was going on. As soon as he had been thus bound, he was seized by the shoulders, and dragged out from the road, by a narrow way, among the trees, and when they stopped, it was beneath the broken face of a rocky cliff. There were three of the ruffians, one of them carrying a small pocket-lantern, the light of which was now brought to bear upon the face of the victim.

"How now?" cried the baronet, striving to rise to a sitting posture, but without effect, "What is all this? What does it mean? Would you rob me?"

But instead of answering him the villains drew apart, and conferred together; and some of their hastily spoken words reached the baronet's ear.

"No, no," said the one who held the lantern, in answer to a previous suggestion; "it is none of our business to parley or confab. Snuff him quick, and have it done with. His horse we'll attend to afterwards."

"So be it," replied one of the others. "If I hit the mark, he won't know what hurt him!"

And that was the plan of the work of that dark hour, in that secluded vale. It was murder, meant for the lord of Cheswold!

CHAPTER II.

THE MISTRESS OF FARWORTH.

Sir Edward, as soon as he had heard enough to open to his understanding the purpose of the villains who had waylaid him, made a desperate effort, and succeeded in bringing himself to a sitting posture. His next thought, instinctive with every brave man, was of self-defence; but that was entirely out of the question, for his limbs he could not use. There was only one other hope, though, in that dismal nook, it was a faint one. His lips were free, and he shouted for help with all his might.

"Hallo!" cried one of the assassins, springing upon him. "This won't do. Hold your noise!" And he bore the baronet back to the earth, and stopped his mouth with his hand. And then, turning to his companions, he bade them to make haste.

He with the lantern turned the light once more upon the fallen man, while the other advanced with an upraised club. But the blow was not struck, for at that moment there came the sound of falling feet from the direction of the road, and new voices broke upon the air.

"Douse the glim!" cried the leader of the villains. "Out o' this, quick!"

The lantern was closed, and the three rascals glided away around the cliff; and in a few moments more new-comers were upon the scene.

"What's all this?" demanded some one, who had stopped close at hand. "Who's here?"

The voice had a hearty, honest sound, and the baronet quickly replied. There were but two of the new-comers, and when they had found where the sufferer lay, they very soon unbound him, and assisted him to his feet.

"They must have been robbers, I think," said the baronet, in answer to an inquiry; "but who they were I cannot tell. I could not see their faces, nor did I recognize their voices.—But to whom am I thus indebted for my life? Who are you, gentlemen?"

"Never mind," answered the one who had thus far been the main speaker, and who seemed to be a young man; "we are men who will never pass by and leave a fellow-creature to suffer, if it lays in our power to help him. And now, if it is a fair question, who are you?"

"My name is Edward Stanton."

"Ha!—the Baronet?"

"Yes."

Both the men seemed to be much surprised at this discovery, and nothing more was said until they reached the road, where Sir Edward looked around for his horse.

"I guess you won't find him here," remarked the elder stranger. "As we came up we heard a disturbance, as though a horse were trying to break from his halter; and presently afterwards we heard the snap of the leash. and then the beast galloped off."

"Which way did he go?"

"That way—to the east."

"Then he has gone on to Farworth, and I think I'll follow on foot. I hope that your way lays in the same direction."

"Yes," replied the younger of the two, after a moment's hesitation; "we are bound that way, and shall be pleased to accompany you as far as the Hall."

As they walked on, the baronet described more fully how he had been attacked, and how nigh his death had been when they so fortunately came to his rescue.

"They pursued a strange course for men whose only object was plunder," said the youth. "Must they not have had some other motive?"

"Perhaps they had," returned Sir Edward. But still he did not wish to think so; and, as soon as he could, he turned the subject of conversation.

The baronet was a keen observer, and thorough student; and he was not long in making up his mind that his companions were above the ordinary level in point of education and refinement of feeling. And he furthermore determined that they were brave and true-hearted. Of course, he would naturally be prejudiced in their favor; but not sufficiently so to materially warp his judgment. By and by they emerged from the deep wood, and the bright, clear evening broke upon them; and then Sir Edward could see his friends quite plainly. The youngest of the two could not have been many years beyond the bounds of minority; while the other might have been near fifty. They were both habited in the garb of the sea, as some portions of their speech nad given token, and both appeared to be common sailors, as neither bore any badge of distinction. Stanton had had his suspicions before; and these suspicions were now confirmed. Why should he dissemble?

"My friends," he said, in a tone so frank and honest that its intent could not be doubted, "do not be alarmed if I know you as you really are. You have rendered me a great assistance, and I am grateful. You have unselfishly befriended me, and I will not prove myself an enemy to you. You are smugglers."

There was a moment's hesitation on the part of the sailors, and then the elder replied:

"You are right, sir. We are smugglers, when engaged in our regular calling; but to-night we are wayfarers——"

"And friends of Sir Edward Stanton," interrupted the baronet, extending his hand; "so let that part drop."

There was an exchange of mutual friendship in the grasp that followed, and then the baronet turned the conversation upon the subject of the coast, and its dangers, in which all three displayed a thorough knowledge of the peculiarities of the English shore of the Irish Sea.

By and by they came to the gate of a broad park, and the old gray walls of Farworth Hall could be seen looming up against the sky close at hand.

"Here we part," said the youth.

"Nay—not so," quickly rejoined the baronet. "You will at least go in and repose for a few minutes. A little refreshment would not be ungrateful. Come—please me in this."

The two men conferred together a moment, and finally consented to go in.

"As you say," remarked the old man, "a little refreshment would not be ungrateful; and we accept your offer, feeling assured that Sir Edward Stanton could not betray a confidence which he himself had invited."

"When he does," replied the baronet, warmly, "let him be detested by all honest men."

While they were thus speaking servants came down from the house with lanterns, who, when they saw Sir Edward, were quickly relieved of a heavy burden.

"Your horse came to the door, with an empty saddle," said one of them, "and our lady, when she knew it, felt sure that you had returned, and had met with some accident upon the road; for she knew that old Hunter would not be saddled and bridled, save for his master's use. So we were just starting out upon the search. What was it, sir? Have you been hurt?"

"Not in the least," replied the baronet. "I had occasion to leave my horse for a few moments in the wood, and he seems to have taken a notion to hasten on and herald my coming. Go and tell your mistress that I am safe, and will greet her right speedily."

As the servitors turned back towards the house the baronet remarked to his companions—

"An instinctive perception of much true manhood in those who have befriended me hath led me to place much trust in you; else I would not take you, upon my own responsibility, into the pure, untainted home of the fair young mistress of Farworth."

"Upon my soul, Sir Edward," returned the elder smuggler, with a grateful warmth, "you do us but justice. For myself I may not speak, but for my companion I can truly say,—he hath at heart all those qualities which may become an honorable man."

"Aye," added the young man, impulsively, at the same time resting his hand upon the arm of his shipmate; "and who hath more truth and nobleness of heart than hath Jack Darwood!"

"Then your name is Darwood?" said the baronet.

"John Darwood, I own, since Elroy hath so spoken it."

"And you, sir," continued Stanton, turning to the young man, "what beside Elroy?"

"Elroy Clifton is my name, sir."

"So,—I shall feel better acquainted with you since I know your names. And now let us hasten on."

If the two smugglers had felt any uneasiness in view of becoming so particularly known to the baronet, they felt it no more; for his whole manner, both of tone and bearing, was such as to disarm them of all fear; and they followed him unhesitatingly.

When they reached the Hall, they were admitted by a servant, who at once conducted them to one of the drawing-rooms, where bright lights were burning, and where he informed them that his mistress would soon be with them.

And now Sir Edward had an opportunity to view his companions more closely; and, if he had before judged them to be true men, he had no occasion to change his opinion. John Darwood was certainly fifty years of age; stout, healthy and muscular; with a full, kindly face, and a mild, blue eye. His brow was broad and full, showing not only the source of mental power, but betraying in those marks which the physiognomist so quickly perceives, a good cultivation of that power.

Elroy Clifton, however, was the object of the baronet's especial attention. He was about two-and-twenty; rather below the medium height; but with a fineness and compactness of development that was rare for one of his years. The muscles of his whole frame were full and round; and yet so purely toned were they, when at rest, by the pervading presence of the inner man, that he seemed both older and slighter than he really was. His hair was black and glossy, clustering about his neck and temples in beautiful curls; his brow high and richly developed; his eyes of that warm, lustrous color, which seems sometimes black, and sometimes brown; while the other features, cut in a mould of manly beauty, were indicative of strong, healthy character. His ears were placed just where the old Greek sculptors used to place the ears of their noblest characters. The ears of a man may seem a slight affair; and yet that generous rounding of the back-head, giving room and play to the social qualities, and enlarging and strengthening the forces of Love—Love of Friends, and Love of Home, and Love of Truth as it is developed in Brotherhood,—this has as much to do with the noble, successful man, as have those other forces which have their seat upon the brow. And those old Greeks knew this when they made the ear the centre, thus giving a vital and healthy force of back-head to balance and control the intellect.

Sir Edward was deeply engaged in studying the handsome, genial face of the youth, when the mistress of the mansion entered. He arose at once, and greeted her, kissing her upon the brow as she embraced him; and then he turned and introduced her to his companions. She had seemed a little startled when she first beheld those two rough garbs of the ocean; but as she glanced into the faces of her strange visitors, her look changed to a warm smile of welcome.

Lorinda Verbrook was mistress of Farworth, and yet not quite mistress of herself; for she was a ward of Sir Edward's. She was only nineteen years of age, and an orphan. Her mother died when she was a prattling child; and at the age of ten years she lost her father. Mr. Verbrook had been one of Sir Edward's warmest and truest friends, and when he knew that he must die, he made the baronet guardian of his child, and gave into his hands full charge of his whole estate, Lorinda being his only heir. So the maiden had grown up like a child of the baronet's; deeply loved as such; making her home for most of the time at Cheswold; though, since she had gained an age of experience and judgment, spending some of the summer months at Farworth, among her own tenants.

And a beautiful girl was Lorinda Verbrook; as bright and joyous as the feathered warblers that made music about her home; and as true and faithful as the circling sun. She knew the ways of the fashionable world, and could bear her part bravely amid the glare and tinsel of titled nobility; but the true home of her soul—the sphere of her greatest enjoyments—was in the quiet atmosphere of friendship, where she could do deeds of love and charity to those around her.

"O, I was so frightened, my dear guardian, when they told me that your horse had come with an empty saddle," she said, after she had taken a seat. "You were not injured?"

"No,—thanks to these kind friends," returned the baronet, glancing gratefully towards the guests. "My horse became frightened at something by the roadside; and I allowed myself in a moment of carelessness, to be thrown from my seat; and so peculiar was my entanglement, and so imminent the danger, that I think I should have lost my life if these kind friends had not come to my aid. They saved me at much risk to themselves; and as they were to pass this way, I made them come in for rest and refreshment; feeling sure that my lady of Farworth would not deem it an intrusion upon her hospitality."

"A joy—a joy," Lorinda cried, turning from the baronet to his companions. "You are most welcome, good sirs—not only now, but at all times. When weary or oppressed there is rest for you at Farworth."

Elroy Clifton gazed upon the beautiful being as he might have gazed upon an angel of mercy; and his only answer was a gathering moisture of the eyes. During the years over which his memory reached he had never heard such music from mortal lips, nor experienced such warmth of soul-light from mortal eyes. He had dreamed of such visions—had dreamed of them in his sleeping and in his waking hours—had dreamed of them as the poor wanderer dreams of an Elysium which he hopes he may at some time find. But never before had he been brought within such pure and happifying influence as now beamed upon him from the presence of the baronet's fair ward. It so chanced that Lorinda was gazing full upon him when the emotion was stirring deepest within him; and, though she may not have seen the depth of his feelings, still there was an electric influence, going out from the powerful organization of the youth, which fell upon her with its silent force, causing a quicker beat of the heart, and bringing a softer light to the eye.

In a little while refreshments were brought, and the conversation turned upon the sea. Lorinda knew that her guests were sailors—she could have told it from their garbs, had not her guardian volunteered the information—and she asked many questions touching the dangers and adventures of ship-board. Darwood threw the burden of reply upon his young companion; and Elroy when his tongue was once loosed, and his fair hostess plainly signified her desire to hear him, conversed with spirit and animation. The baronet was surprised at the extent of his general information; by the clearness of his reasoning; and, above all, by the purity and chaste correctness of his language. But not so Lorinda. She seemed to regard all this as a matter of course—as something belonging of right to the face and form before her. She had taken her view of the youth before his lips were opened; and his speech did not disappoint her.

At length Darwood arose from his seat, and said he must go.

"Why not rest here until morning?" asked Sir Edward.

"That is impossible," replied the smuggler. "I trust," he added, beseechingly, "that you will believe me."

"You will not forget that Farworth Hall is always open to you," said Lorinda.

Elroy left his companion to answer this, for he did not care to. He turned away as soon as he could, and glided from the apartment; and when Darwood joined him upon the piazza, they moved down the park together. They walked a long distance that night; and yet they did not converse as was their wont. Something was said about the attack upon the baronet; and something was said about the Lady Lorinda; but they both seemed to think much more than they spoke.

CHAPTER III.

RESTITUTION OF A HEART. SILVERTHORNE.

After their guests had gone, the baronet and Lady Lorinda returned to the drawing-room, where the latter took a seat by the deep oriel, while the former paced up and down the floor; and thus they did for some time. Finally Sir Edward stopped close by where the maiden sat, and having regarded her for a few moments, he spoke:

"Lorinda, are you thinking of the smugglers?"

"Smugglers!" she uttered, with a start.

"Excuse me. I spoke before I thought. But, since the truth is out, let it be. Yes—my two friends were smugglers."

"Smugglers?" repeated Lorinda, slowly, and with a strange fluttering of the voice. "Was he a smuggler?"

"He? Both, I tell you. Ah—I see. You were thinking particularly of the younger one. Well, well,—I don't wonder. He is a noble fellow, and I must say that he has fastened himself wonderfully deep in my good opinion."

"*A smuggler!*" murmured the mistress of Farworth, letting her eyes droop.

The baronet watched her, and a quaint expression crept over his features.

"Perhaps," he said, with a smile, "you are sorry that you gave him so free a passport to your hospitality."

"No, no," she replied, shaking off the mood that was upon her, and appearing herself again. "If he is a smuggler, he is still a man; and, as such, he hath proved himself worthy the gratitude and esteem of Sir Edward Stanton."

"Right, Lorinda."

"And, furthermore," she added, with a warm glow upon her beautiful face, "in that he hath proved himself a friend to my beloved guardian, he hath also merited the gratitude and esteem of myself. And now, will you tell me more of your adventure. I thought old Hunter was so well trained that his master had full control over him."

She spoke as though she would avoid, for the time, further reference to Elroy Clifton, and her guardian humored her; but he was not inclined to inform her of the exact nature of the danger to which he had been subject. Perhaps he kept the thing from her for fear of exciting needless alarm touching the safety of travel through the vale; and perhaps he had some other reason. At all events, he left her to infer that nothing more dangerous than a fall from his horse had transpired; and then he went on to tell her of his visit to London, and of the things he had seen and heard during his journey. At the end of an hour he got up, and began to pace the floor again. He seemed somewhat agitated, and more than once he pressed his hand upon his heart as though there was pain there.

Finally he sat down, this time close by his ward's side, and took her hand. He was very calm, though there were tokens of anxiety upon his face.

"My dear Lorinda," he said, in a low, tender tone, "I have something of the utmost importance to say to you."

She gazed earnestly upon him, for there was a deep meaning in his manner.

"I have been thinking upon it," he continued, "since I have been gone, and I have finally reached a solution of what has been to me a troublesome problem. Listen to me, and bear with me; and believe that to me, on all the earth, your good stands foremost and highest among the aims of my life."

She trembled, and a tear dropped from her long, dark lashes.

"Good Sir Edward, I do believe you," she murmured. And yet she did not gaze up into his face. She left her hand remaining where he had taken it, and placed her other upon it—a simple, heartfelt token of her sincerity.

"My dear Lorinda," he resumed, with more steadiness of tone, "for many years I was a lonesome, weary, heart-broken dweller upon the earth. After my wife and child were dead, the pall fell about me; and, for years, I sought not to lift it. At length your father left you in my charge. You were a bright and gleesome child then, and I gave you the place which the offspring of my own blood might have occupied, had he lived. While the bright sunlight of your smile beamed upon me, and the silver tones of your sweet voice made music in my home, I had something to enjoy. But, miser that I was, I allowed a new fear to darken upon me. As you grew older, and the bloom of opening womanhood grew flush upon your cheek, and your charms of mind and of person began to develop into rich fullness, the thought came that I might ere long lose you. It was the way of the world, and you would follow in it.——Ah—you need not speak. I know what you would say, I judged naturally.——But I thought of this, and the thought gave me pain. I thought what I should do when you were gone. The heiress of Farworth was becoming a woman, and must soon feel a woman's love. I felt that you were no longer a child, and that I might soon cease to have even the place of a parent."

"Sir Edward!"

"Hush, darling. Hear me through." He still held her hand, and gazed fixedly upon her. "I judged naturally. Should you find a husband, that husband would hardly recognize a parent's right in the quondam guardian of his wife, and I should lose my child, and then—then, all would be dark again. I sought counsel of my heart, and suffered much. Had I sought counsel of my reason, I might have been led into a different way. I felt that you alone, of all the earth, were left for me to love, and that I could not lose you. Then came the fancy that I might teach you to love me in a new way, and thus keep the wealth of your heart's pure fount forever. I spoke to you my hopes, and you listened. I asked you if you could love me so as to be my wife, and you finally told me, yes. I thought I was happy then, and that the sun of my joy was fairly risen. But, darling, I was only deceiving myself."

Lorinda trembled violently, but presently she leaned forward and rested her brow upon the baronet's bosom.

"O, no, no," she cried. "You were not deceived."

"Yes, yes, dear one," he replied, winding his arm about her. "I know I was deceived—not in you darling—not in you, but in my own judgment. You loved me, for I had been as a father to you, but—could you love me more without loving me less? Could you put off the trust of the child, and put on the passionate love of the wife? No, no—ah, no—not for me! A soul like yours would lead you, through gratitude, to my wishes, but a heart like yours, so full of life and warmth, and so bounding and free in its impulses and aspirations, could not bend to the lifelong servitude we would impose upon it. As the love of the child might fade before the dawning of a new relation, that other love might wither and die ere it fairly had birth, and thus I should be left more alone than ever! This—this—I have at length seen."

More closely crept the trembling maiden to his bosom, and her hands reached up to his neck.

"Dear, dear guardian, I will still love you—I will love you ever!"

"But you would not be my wife?"

"Yes—yes."

He pressed her more fondly to his bosom, and imprinted a kiss upon her upturned brow.

"No, no, sweet one, it must not be. I have awakened from the dream, and have reasoned calmly. I have no right to resign my guardianship thus; I have no right to tax your love with such duties. Before God, and in the light of the world's experience, I dare not resign the love which you bear me from the pure, unselfish trustfulness of your child's heart upon such a hazard."

Sir Edward lifted her from his bosom, and took her hand as before.

"Lorinda," he said, so solemnly and so truthfully that there seemed need of no answer, "I have passed judgment, and I believe it is good. I am to you a father—you are to me a child. As a father I love thee, and shall work for thy welfare, and as a child thou shalt trust in me, and rest upon my bosom. So it shall be, as it hath been in times past, and that other thought shall be as though our minds had never entertained it. From this hour, as from the hour when first you came, in gentle childhood, to the love of my heart, you shall be to me a daughter, trusting and true, and I will be to thee a father, faithful and earnest. And so let the years come. What the future may bring we cannot tell, nor will we seek to know. only, let me say this: I hope I may live to find a source of greatest happiness in hearing your children call me—grandfather!

"There, sweet one—now kiss your old guardian again as of yore, and then go to bed, and dream happy dreams. In the morning you shall tell me that it is all right. No, no—not now—not now, darling. So—good-night! Angels of peace guard and bless thee!"

In the quiet retreat of her chamber, Lorinda sank upon her knees, and prayed for that good man—prayed for him as a child would pray for a fond parent. And so, instinctively, did her heart feel and speak towards her guardian. Surely, Sir Edward had not been mistaken.

And the baronet, by his lone bedside, offered up his prayers. The petition was not so simple as that which had gone up from the lips of the maiden, for he had more to pray for—ah, much more.

In the morning Lorinda came down, and when she met the kind smile of her guardian, and heard his blessing, and received the paternal kiss, she felt that the old days had come again.

"My darling," the baronet whispered, gazing fondly down into her sweet face, "is it not all right?"

"Yes," she replied.

"And you are satisfied?"

"If you are, dear guardian."

"I am more than satisfied, my child. I am happy in the consciousness that I have done right. So—it is settled—it is passed." And then he led his ward out into the bright light of the morning's sun, and talked with her of the work which her people were doing, and when they came in to breakfast, the old relation was so fully established that the current of its affections seemed never to have been changed.

It was now that Lorinda began to feel how noble and true had been the decision of her guardian. She would have married with him, and she could have loved him; but as the love of the child found free vent once more, she was forced to the conviction that her heart might have failed beneath the burden of that other duty, and she felt more buoyant and hopeful now that it was removed. She felt more like herself, and she could look forward into the future with a more self-reliant courage.

Sir Edward spent the forenoon in company with his ward, going with her over the grounds, and offering such suggestions as he deemed proper and necessary. After dinner he had his horse saddled and brought to the door, for the purpose of returning to Cheswold.

"You will come over to-morrow," he said, as he stood upon the piazza with Lorinda.

"Yes," she replied.

"And you had better take one or two of your servants with you."

"You do not think there is danger?"

"O, no—only it is well enough to be on the safe side. It is not always well for girls to ride unattended over the country; for, once in a hundred times, there might be need."

She said she would take attendants with her, and the baronet then rode away. He allowed his horse to pursue a cantering pace until he reached the wood, and then he drew him up to a walk. When he arrived at the spot where he had been attacked on the night before, he stopped, and got off upon the ground. He found where he had been dragged out from the road, and he followed the track to the face of the cliff; but he could find no further clue. He returned to his horse, and pursued his way homeward, riding at a slow walk through the deep vale, buried in thoughts which brought clouds upon his brow, and cast shadows of pain over his face. When he reached the manor house, he found his brother-in-law waiting to receive him.

"How is this, my dear Sir Edward," cried Owen, with considerable show of anxiety, "you have met with an accident."

"How learned you that?" asked the baronet.

"One of the people came over from Farworth this morning, and told us that your horse reached there without you."

"Well—so it was; but there was nothing very serious."

"Still," pursued Owen, with evident eagerness, "there must have been some danger."

"Nothing to speak of, I assure you. A man may be thrown from his saddle, you know, in a moment of carelessness, and yet run no great risk."

"But, my dear Sir Edward, you are not wont to be thus unseated by any trifling cause."

"And yet a very trifling thing may unseat the most experienced rider. Nevertheless, I might be more careful another time."

"I thought," continued Owen, "that there might have been something serious."

"And what might you have thought in that line?" asked the baronet, looking sharply into Murdock's face.

"Why—I feared that you might have been waylaid by some of the villains who are prowling about this region."

"What villains?"

"I allude to the smugglers who infest our coast."

"And why should they attack me?"

"Why? To rob you, of course."

"O, no. You are out there, Owen. The smugglers have not troubled me; at least not to my knowledge." And with this the baronet passed into the hall

Owen Murdock walked away down the park, muttering to himself, as though he were not well pleased with what had transpired. But he met Sir Edward at the supper table, and all seemed pleasant between them. At least, so they evidently meant that it should be; though a shrewd observer might have detected, in some of the furtive glances, that neither of them felt perfect confidence in the other.

Before the baronet retired, he called his gate-keeper to him, and told him that he expected a visitor that night.

"He will be here in an hour or so, and you will admit him at once. I shall be waiting for him, so you need not leave your post to conduct him. He has not forgotten the way to my library. You remember Silverthorne?"

"The boat-builder?"

"Yes."

"Aye," replied the servitor, with a look of surprise. "I have a faint remembrance; but it's many a year since I have seen him."

"Well—he will be here to-night. He is an old man now. Admit him at once, and allow him to come to my library."

The mention of the boat-builder's name brought up a host of recollections in the gate-keeper's mind, and he would have liked to ask a great many questions; but he knew better than to trouble his master with them.

Half an hour before midnight, the gate-bell was rung, and the keeper went to answer the summons. He found there an old man whose snow-white hair fell far over his shoulders, and whose beard of the same silvery hue, swept low upon the breast. His garb was travel-worn and dusty, and in his hand he carried a stout oaken staff. His frame was stout, and but slightly bent, and his carriage firm and steady; showing pretty plainly that intemperance and excess had not been among the vices of his life.

"Is Sir Edward Stanton at home!" he asked.

"Yes."

"I would see him. I think he expects me."

"He expects some one, as he told me."

"My name is Silverthorne."

"Ah—you are the man. You know the way?"

"Perfectly."

As the rays of the lantern fell upon the face of the old wayfarer, lighting them perfectly to view, the gate-keeper was startled. He watched the strange visitor until he had passed into the Hall, and then he muttered to himself, with a mysterious shake of the head:

"By St. George and the dragon! I've seen that man afore; and 'twasn't a boat-buildin' neither."

And from that time till he fell asleep upon his pillow, the poor gate-keeper racked his brain over the problem to no effect.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE PASTOR'S SISTER.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

The pastor's home was splendid, but lonely. His own household were scarcely less strangers to the solitary man than the passengers whose tread he heard beneath his windows. He knew their faces, and bestowed upon them religious instruction, and was the kindest and most lenient of masters. But his life was on a far higher and different plane from theirs, and they could neither know nor sympathize with him.

He was almost always busy, for his parish was large, and his duties onerous; but in his rare moments of leisure his thoughts always recurred to one subject—his lost sister Aldine, who had gone out, years before, from his country home, in sorrow and in shame, and many were the prayers and yearnings of his soul as he sat in the silence of his study, with memories of the past, in which *she* had been so near and dear to him, for his sole companions.

It was thus he sat one wild November evening. The wind howled through the deserted streets, and the rain pattered upon the pavements with a dull, monotonous sound, that was like the light, slow tread of multitudinous human feet, and spite double casements and heavy curtains, the chill, damp air penetrated the study, and disputed sway with the glowing warmth of the red coals in the polished grate.

The pastor started as the sharp tinkle of the door-bell broke the silence of the house, and listened as the outer door was opened, and voices in quick question and answer reached his ear. In a few seconds more the study door opened, and the servant ushered in a tall man, whose heavy cloak, though clinging with wet about his form, served to hide the lower portion of his face, even after the removal of his hat showed a pale, deeply lined brow.

He bowed in answer to the pastor's greeting, and accepted the offered chair by the fireside He threw back his cloak, and the pastor saw a face of almost ghastly pallor, surrounded by hair and beard of raven blackness—a face that must have been cold, and dark, and proud, but was now convulsed by some strong emotion, or by pain.

In gentle tones the pastor inquired the cause of the stranger's visit, and added his assurance that any assistance in his power should be freely given.

A sardonic smile broke over the stranger's face. He bent his head, as if in thanks, and then spoke for the first time since his entrance.

"A man like me," he said, in hollow tones, broken by a rattling cough, "applies but once in his life to a priest. When death is near, and he has only horror for the Past, and dread of the Future, he turns as a last resource to the mummery he has all his life despised. I am dying, and I have come to inquire if there may perchance be pardon, comfort, or hope for me in that religion which you teach."

"There is pardon for the penitent, there is comfort for the believer, there is hope for all, through our blessed Saviour," said the pastor, mildly. "But you are ill, in bodily pain; let me first minister to your bodily comfort." And in spite of the protestations of his strange guest, he set about ministering to his necessities, drew a couch to the fire, rang the bell and ordered refreshments, and dry clothing, and ceased not until fed, warmed, and wrapped in a warm dressing gown of his own, the sick man lay, pale but quiet, upon the pillows heaped at the easiest angle beneath his head.

Those hard, glittering eyes had never known much of the luxury of tears, but now they filled, again and again, until, bright and clear, the drops, wrung by penitence or remorse, coursed down his white cheeks.

"For me, for me," he murmured. "There must indeed be something in that religion which can thus prompt a man to minister to a stranger, and perhaps his worst enemy. And I—what cause has not this good man to hate me!

"Do you know who I am?" he said, abruptly and aloud. "Do you know, Simeon Dale, whom you are feeding, and clothing, and sheltering by your fireside? No. I thought you did not. Listen, while I tell you a story—the story of a man's life, I knew.

"There was a boy, born of mingled races; hot, tropical blood boiled in his veins; he had something of the cruel, crafty, treacherous Indian, and the Anglo-Saxon power of intellect and towering ambition—a strange medley, you will say, producing a most unsymmetrical and inharmonious character.

"He went on and on in his career, grew to reckless manhood, and at length, in a pleasant country town, saw the fair young creature who was destined to awaken, for the first time, the flame of true love in his heart. He was a fiend, but he knew how to wear the garments of an angel of light. He sought, and wooed, and won this young creature. She believed him as true and good as she was; she had all the faith and trust of a first great love. And he—he loved her, but he lured her on to her ruin. There was a marriage ceremony, but he was the husband of another, and it was void. He told her he was obliged to leave her, and so prevailed on her to become his bride, and she parted from him as from her husband—he to return to the city, where his wife, impatient at his long ab-absence, dwelt, she to her home among the mountains, and the house of her brother, a village pastor.

"Once or twice he wrote to her, and her innocent replies sent many a pang to his hardened bosom. He longed to go to her, to acknowledge her before the world, but the woman he hated and feared now, kept him firmly within her power. She had learned his secret, and he knew that in a country where law prevails, he had forfeited his liberty by this false marriage.

"At last his wife made him write this to Aldine—Yes, Aldine, you have guessed the secret ere this—and tell her that she was no wife, and that her child would be nameless and fatherless. He has learned ere this how two hearts broke that fatal day in the quiet parsonage, which no one would have named the scene of such a tragedy. He did not think she would have felt it so; give him at least credit for that.

"After a year or two he was free, and then he sought Aldine, not because he was worthy of her, but because he so loved her that life was worthless without her. But he sought in vain. Aldine and her brother had left the mountain village. The brother was easily traced, but the very existence of Aldine seemed blotted out. For years he sought her, used his wealth till all was gone in endeavoring to trace her; then sickness, poverty, death near and terrible, and he has come here to tell all, to ask if it be possible for such as he to be forgiven, to creep away again, and die alone and be forgotten."

The pastor had listened in silence to this terrible tale. Covering his eyes, he sat apart and prayed for strength, and light, and the power of forgiveness. The sudden silence aroused him from his bitter thoughts. He looked up and saw that the stranger had partly risen from his couch, and with outstretched arms seemed to implore his forgiveness. He hastened toward him, but before he could reach him, the crimson blood issued in a dark stream from his lips, and he fell forward, conscious, indeed, but unable to speak or lift his imploring hands.

"I will send a nurse at once," the physician said, as an hour later he left the pleasant guest-chamber to which the evil man so strangely thrust upon the pastor's hospitalities, had been conveyed. "His life depends upon quiet and careful nursing. Let no one else enter the room after she comes, but yourself. Mrs. Simeon will know what to do; trust to her."

That night the pastor spent in prayer beside the couch of the dying man, evidently through all unconscious, and often breaking out into ravings that disclosed many a dark secret of his evil life, fast approaching his end. Opposite him bent the slight figure of the nurse, her large eyes gleaming from a pale face in the half darkness of the room.

The day was breaking when the doctor came in again. "He is going fast," he whispered. "He will probably have an interval of consciousness ere he breathes his last." As he spoke the eyes of the sick man opened, and fell with the light of reason upon the group that surrounded him. The nurse had moved away, but now she came silently, and held a draught to the sufferer's lips. He drank and looked his thanks. A strange spasm passed over his face. His hand closed upon the white hand that held the cup. Terror and joy struggled in his aspect. Eagerness lit his eys. He lifted his arm with new power, and strove to draw her toward him.

"Aldine!" burst from his lips. "My wife!" Then the blood gushed from them, he fell back, a convulsion shook his limbs, and all was over.

By the pastor's fireside a pale woman sits, in the pastor's pew, veiled and rigid, she is sometimes seen, and the lanes and courts of the great city, where poverty and vice and suffering have their haunts, know her well. The pastor calls her sister, but his people have been obliged to respect her reserve, and know her not. Her boy, with all the proud, dark beauty of his father, but with nobler aims and purer instincts, is the pastor's adopted child, and the joy of his long desolate heart.

WINTER SONG AT HOBOKEN.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

When last the summer kissed thy trees,
And joyous music gave
From many a soft harp of the breeze
That trembled o'er the wave,
I only breathed, "for others shine
The wreaths on this delicious shrine!
Ah, not for me! Ah, not for me
The sparkling wave and emerald tree!"

II.

But now when drear and leafless groan
These branches in the gale;
And waves make mournful undertone
For Winter's mighty wail,
In thee I take a dark delight,
And, solemn, walk through all the night,
Chanting along each moaning pass
A Poet's melancholy mass.

III.

For here how oft in Summer's ray,
With dear fond friends I strayed,
Or whiled the lovely hours away
In yon Elysian glade!
But, oh, where are they?—from this shore
Gone ever, ever, evermore!
Then what have I with sun and flowers
When they repose in *cypress* bowers?

IV.

Wail, wail aloud, thou Winter wild!
Dark billow, give reply!
And let the snow-drift here be piled
Beneath a horrent sky!
Hoboken, only give to me
The moaning wave and stricken tree
While for the Lost in lonely pass
I chant a melancholy mass!

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PERILS OF THE WILDERNESS.

BY DR. S. COMPTON SMITH.

The following incident, related by an old lady friend, who has seen a rich and flourishing city spring up, as if by magic art, about the spot where her solitary shanty once stood, illustrates one among the many perils to which the pioneers of the West are exposed.

"My husband and myself," said she, "were among the first of the Connecticut people who settled in Northern Ohio. He had selected this place, (now Sandusky city,) as he said, because this portion of the shore of Lake Erie reminded him of his native home, on the shore of Long Island Sound. Accompanying us were several other young families: but these, dreading the rough autumnal winds of the lake, chose to make their "locations" at a considerable distance from ours, and upon higher ground.

"It was in the spring of 1816 that we reached our 'location,' and my husband, being a young and athletic man, had soon prepared a few acres of land, and got in a crop of corn and potatoes for our winter provisions. He also, with the aid of our distant neighbors, erected a log cabin for our shelter, and another for the two cows, a yoke of oxen, and the few head of sheep we had driven with us from Pennsylvania, as we came West.

"Late in the autumn, after my husband had harvested his corn and secured his fodder, he and I turned to, and devoting our evenings to it, shelled out a quantity of it sufficient for our winter's supply of bread. With this he prepared to go to the nearest mill, which was on Vermillion river.

"There was then only a '*blazed*' trail through the woods, and with our slow-footed oxen, it was a journey of several days. But leaving me a good woodpile, and cautioning me to see that the sheep were housed every night, out of reach of the wolves, he started away.

"We had a large mastiff, a noble animal, which my father had given me the day we started from our old home, and Reuben—that was my husband's name—told me I could not be very lonesome with so brave and faithful a companion. But notwithstanding old Put was one of the most intelligent and social dogs I ever saw, I did feel very lonesome. It was the first time my husband and I had been separated since we married, and the days and nights of his absence seemed very long.

"However, Put and I got along very well. The fifth day of my husband's absence had worn away, and on the following I looked for his return. But on the morning of that day, I discovered the ground white with snow, and the thick, heavy flakes were falling fast. Toward evening the weather moderated, and the snow turning to sleet saturated the surface of that on the ground; and it becoming colder, a hard, icy crust was formed sufficient to bear my weight upon it.

"This I knew would detain Reuben; for with his loaded wagon it would have been impossible for him to reach home before he had had time to break his way ahead of the team. There were settlers along the trail, so I was not much concerned on his account.

"I had milked the cows and fed them in the stable, and with the help of Put had secured the sheep; and returning to the house proceeded to prepare my supper, and make myself as comfortable as possible for one more solitary night.

"There were hanging in the wide throat of our chimney several hams of fresh venison, from one of which I cut steaks sufficient for myself and the dog, and cooked them. The fragrance of the juicy meat steamed upwards through the wide chimney, and filled the air, as I perceived whenever I went to the door.

"Put and I made a hearty supper, and clearing up things I went to bed; while the dog, coiling himself, in his usual corner upon the hearth, was soon lost in dreams, if one might guess by his frequent starts, and the half-smothered growls that broke from his quivering lips. Now and then he would start suddenly to his feet, as if to pursue some imaginary enemy, and then, awakened by the motion, would, with a manner of vexation and disappointment, lay down again to his slumbers.

"I had amused myself watching his motions by the cheerful blaze of my fire, till I fell asleep, and was dreaming of Reuben, when I was awakened by an angry growl of the dog; and on casting my eyes toward the hearth, saw that he had left his sleeping-place. I sprang to a sitting posture, and perceived the animal with his nose to the crack of the door, and with tail erect and bristled back, appeared to be greatly excited.

"I spoke to him, and the dog finding I was awake, made eager signs to have the door opened to him. As I moved towards it, to gratify him, I heard pattering steps upon the frozen surface of the snow, and immediately knew that some kind of wild animal was prowling about.

"I opened the door carefully to let the dog out, and scarcely had I lifted the latch, and widened the crack to reconnoitre, than Put, with another growl, wedged his nose into the opening, and with a bound forced his way out.

"The moon had risen, and it was quite light; and to my terror I saw the dark forms of at least half a score of gaunt wolves moving in front of the house; and how many more there were I could only judge by the pattering sounds of those I could not see.

"I closed the door and piled wood against it, and then listened to the sounds without.

"The brave dog sprang among the intruders, and soon a fierce battle was raging between him and the wolves. I could hear his smothered growls, as he tore at the throat of some one of the howling brutes, and then hurled him to a distance to grapple with another.

"The noble fellow fought with a truly heroic desperation; for I could perceive by the sounds that the wolves, instead of retreating were emboldened by their numbers, and all set fiercely upon him. Yet he struggled with a determined courage, and I could hear the wolves howling with pain and anger as they alternately retreated from and returned to the fight. But above all their cries I continued to hear the deep, angry growling of poor old Put, who thus fiercely beset by the dastard gang, seemed to be a match for them all.

"While with beating heart and excited nerves I stood by the door, listening to this unequal fight, I heard a rush of pattering feet, coming from the direction of the stable, and knew that a fresh gang of wolves had arrived to the relief of their kind; and I now forgot all else in my anxiety for my noble Put. It was impossible for him to withstand all these fierce creatures; and, regardless of the danger, I reached down Reuben's rifle, and throwing open the door, I sprang out upon the snow.

"As I did this I perceived every foot of the icy court was stained with blood, and at a little distance a dark mass of the disgusting brutes were gathered in a knot, and fiercely tearing at each other, and an object I immediately knew to be my poor, brave dog.

"Without taking time to reflect upon my own danger, I ran toward the spot, and raising the gun, fired. A yell of agony from two of three of the wolves, satisfied me that I had not wasted my bullet; and then, frightened by the report, and perhaps by the flare of light that suddenly broke upon them from the open door of the cabin, the cowardly animals retreated a moment, from the spot, leaving a number of their dead and dying comrades scattered upon the snow.

"Where I had fired upon them lay my poor dog; and dropping my gun, I ran to him, and catching the faithful creature in my arms, I ran with him towards the house. He was terribly lacerated. But I knew by his motions that he was not dead. It was a race for life; for scarcely had I turned towards the door, than the wolves, seeing me retreating, rushed upon me, growling and snapping fearfully about me. But completely absorbed in my anxiety for my dying dog, I flew through them, leaving portions of my dress in their bloody jaws; and reaching the door, closed it upon them, and replaced the barricade of fuel against it.

"I laid my poor Put upon the floor, and examined his injuries. Poor fellow! he had received his death wounds, and licking my hands as if in acknowledgment of my kindness, soon expired.

"In the meanwhile, the wolves now having it all their own way, were gathering in great numbers about the place. They had apparently scented the blood of their fellows from a distance, and I could hear them tramping over the snow, in every direction; while frequent attempts were made to force their way through the crack beneath the door. I could see them push their noses boldly between the threshold and the shutter; and heating the iron poker, I punched them with its red hot end, till they were glad to quit the spot.

"I must have been engaged thus with my fierce besiegers for several hours, for so at least it seemed to me, when I heard a scratching sound on the roof, and then the tramping of the wolves upon the top of the chimney.

I ran to the capacious fire-place, and on looking up, was horrified to perceive four or five pairs of fierce red eyes glaring menacingly down upon me. The scent of the venison had doubtless attracted them to the spot. The chimney was scarcely ten feet high, and had it not been for the hot embers which filled the fire-place, the hungry brutes would have been upon me before I had discovered their presence there.

"Now, what was I to do? I dared not use the fuel I had piled against the door, for fear the wolves might make an entrance through it; and yet it was necessary to keep up a hot fire, or the creatures would descend the chimney upon me.

"I now bethought me of the straw bed beneath the feather tick, and lost no time in dragging it to the floor; and ripping it open, I drew out its contents, and threw handfuls of it upon the fire. As the flames roared up the chimney, I could hear the wolves draw back from the heat and smoke, and jump again to the roof. But as soon as the straw had flared up, and the smoke ascended, the creatures sprang once more upon the top of the chimney

"Thus I kept them away till the last handful of straw was consumed; and still, as if determined to gain entrance to the cabin, in spite of all my efforts, the wolves returned to the opening, and were about to spring down upon the nearly extinguished fire. I now had resort to the feathers; but these not only put out the last spark of fire, but the scent of them seemed to make the starving brutes more furious than ever.

"My fears were now becoming terrible; and despairing of keeping the wolves longer from the house, I cast my eyes upwards towards the beams overhead, determining, as a last resort, to climb to them, to escape their murderous jaws.

"As I looked up, I observed, what I had till then forgotten, my husband's small squirrel gun. It was a single barrel, and I knew it contained only a charge of small shot. But I remembered the effect of the report of the rifle upon the cowardly animals, and I hoped to scare them from the chimney with this weapon.

"Scarcely had the idea occurred to me than I acted upon it; and cocking the gun, I held it up the chimney and fired. The piece was more heavily loaded than I suspected, or perhaps the charge had been a long time in it, and with a loud report it fell from my hands among the ashes.

"At the instant I heard a howl of pain, then a desperate scratching and struggling upon the top of the chimney, and then the body of a huge, gray brindled wolf fell heavily upon the hearth at my feet, and rolled out upon the floor.

"My first thought was to recover the gun, and with the breech of it to batter out the brains of the still panting creature. But seeing the butcher knife still sticking in the venison ham from which I had cut the steaks for supper, I snatched it and turned to where I thought the wolf was lying.

"But the animal had only been stunned by the fall, and recovering, had leapt to a corner of the room. I was now alone, and shut up with a savage beast, in a little space scarcely ten feet square!

"I was about to drop the knife, and attempt to reach the beams overhead, when the wolf, but slightly wounded, and entirely recovered from the fright of his sudden descent, sprang upon me!

"His red eyeballs glared ferociously, and with expanded jaws, from which gouts of blood were dripping, he was upon me. I felt his hot breath upon my face, and then his fangs closed with a burning, tearing sensation upon my bosom!

"I was frantic with terror and pain, and know not what I did. Only I have a consciousness of making, in my desperate struggle with the monster that was tearing out my vitals, more than human efforts! I struck with my knife and wrestled with a maddened energy. I have a faint impression of this, and that I fell powerless to the floor, and experienced a sensation as of streams of boiling water over my bosom, neck and face—no more!

"When I came to myself I was lying upon the bed, and Reuben, standing over me, was bathing my face, while the stains of blood were upon his hands, upon the bedclothes, the floor, everywhere, and by the hearth—there where poor Putnam, my faithful dog, used to lie—was stretched the mangled body of a huge, gaunt wolf.

"This last sight recalled the terrible events of the past night, and recovering voice, I stretched forth my arms, and twining them round my dear husband's neck, drew his face to mine, and asked him how I had been rescued from my furious assailants. He said he had toiled all night through the snow to reach home, and as the day was breaking, he came in sight of our cabin. Alarmed at the sight of blood, and the dead bodies of the wolves scattered about, he rushed to the door and called my name. No reply was made, and exerting all his strength, he at length succeeded in breaking down the door, and entered the cabin.

"Here a terrible sight met his view—my (as he supposed) lifeless form stretched upon the bloody floor, with the butcher knife still clutched in my hand, and the dead wolf still upon my bosom. He hurled the disgusting object to the hearth, and placing me upon the bed, discovered that I still breathed.

"Under Reuben's affectionate and skillful nursing I soon regained my health. But such was the terrible shock of that struggle with the wolves, that from that night my hair lost its glossy brown, and gradually faded and bleached, till before my twenty-fifth year my head became as white as it is at this moment."

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THE PADDED ROOM AT DEEPWATER.

A TALE OF AN ENGLISH INN.

BY MARY W. STANLEY GIBSON.

It was nearly dark when I reached Deepwater, and I was glad enough to see the "fly" of the "Ten Jolly Drovers" waiting at our end of the station, as I stepped out upon the other.

The "Ten Jolly Drovers" was a gem of a country inn! And the plump, comely woman in a widow's cap and gown, who stood courtesying in the porch, with a great silver tankard of "home-brewed" in her hands, "to take the dust out of the gentleman's throat"—what of her? Why, she was a gem of a country landlady, to be sure!

I mentioned, when my pen first touched this paper, that it was nearly dark when I reached Deepwater station. A drive of four miles with Jim the coachman, had made it still more near, and by the time I entered the red-tiled porch, every fowl had gone to roost, and lamps were twinkling in the kitchen and the hall. Candles had been taken into a room at the right, just beyond the bar, for me, and the sight of a tempting table, laid for a meal, half supper and half tea, made me so hungry that I at once "fell to," feasted like a king, and then went to bed and slept without the least incursion of nightmare.

The week which I had allotted for my holiday passed rapidly away. I congratulated myself upon having found this happy valley—this home where no shadow of care brooded—these friends whose lives had more of sunshine and less of shadow, than any I had ever known before. But "Call no man happy till he dies," says a wise old Eastern proverb. And I rejoin—Call no place Paradise till you see its angels. For places, like people, have their good and bad attendant spirits. I found it so, before my sojourn at the Ten Jolly Drovers was over.

On the last night of my stay I sat late in my little parlor below stairs. When I took my candle to go up stairs, the house was shut up. Mrs. Ball had retired to her bedroom in the third story, and I could hear my friend Jim snoring on his settle in the kitchen, where he always slept, with the house dog at his feet, ready to defend the place if burglars should take a sudden fancy to to visit it during the small hours of the night.

The dog growled, but hearing my voice, gave a kind of satisfied snort, and betook himself to slumber again. I stole cautiously up the creaking stairs. A gust of air coming from the landing place nearly blew my light out, and shading it with my hand, I saw that a small, arched door opposite the stairs, which I had never noticed before, stood ajar. It seemed to lead into a narrow passage—and wondering much how it could have escaped my notice, I stepped in. Another door, strongly barred with iron, was just before me. I hesitated a moment—but something stronger than mere curiosity—a kind of breathless interest, that startled me, urged me on. I opened it. Not easily, however—till it was suddenly wrenched from my hand by some one inside—so suddenly that I almost fell into a large, square room, hung with dark curtains, and only lighted by an iron lamp, in a wire case that burned high up on the wall. The door closed gently behind me—but I could see no person in the room. Yet something had certainly wrenched it from my grasp!

I suppose I felt afraid. I remember I was very much inclined to whistle, or sing—just as I used to be when, in my boyhood, I had to pass a lonely church-yard at night. I walked into the middle of the room and put my lamp on the floor, because there was no table or chair on which I could leave it. Then I took a long look at my surroundings, feeling more and more like whistling every moment.

Not a picture hung upon the walls—not an article of furniture, made the place more homelike. A low divan ran around the room; at one end it widened, and was furnished with blankets, counterpane and pillows, now tossed into a confused heap. The windows were heavily shuttered and barred—the grate was also barred in, and wired—the shovel, poker and tongs had been removed—also the fender. The floor felt strangely beneath my feet, and I bent down to examine it. It was *padded*, and covered over with elastic matting. I touched the walls—they were not hung with dark drapery, as I had first imagined, but padded also, and covered with a cloth looking and feeling like leather. What strange mystery was this, in this quiet, out-of-the-way place? Who dwelt in this room where safety was evidently the first thing studied, where even the solitary lamp twinkled, like a star, far out of reach? I sat down on the divan and wondered at my discovery.

At last, as my eyes grew accustomed to the darkness of the place, I saw something stir, near the bed—a moment after I heard a low sigh.

"Who sighs so?" I asked, with a beating heart.

A tall, dark figure rose from the ground. It sounds romantic at this distance of time, but it seemed anything but romantic then. I was almost frightened to death, and had no power to speak or stir, as it advanced slowly towards me. Clad in a long, dark robe, like the habit of a monk, a man stood before me, pale, wasted, and with long, white hair, and a beard like snow. He gazed at me a moment in silence, and then sighed again heavily. I gathered up my courage, and said to myself that I must be dreaming, and that my first word would scare the illusion away.

"Who are you, and how came you here?" I asked.

"I am a lost soul," he said, in a melancholy voice. "Lost forever and forever, and forever."

Again he sighed. Heaven knows I am as matter-of-fact as any lawyer can very well be, and have little faith to spare for visions and hallucinations; but there was something so awful in his look and tone, that my blood ran cold, and for the moment I believed that what I had heard was true.

"But why do you seek me?" I managed to say.

"You were to come. You came," said the sad voice. "But will you help me?"

"How can I?"

He drew nearer, and bent down, clasping and unclasping his hands in a strange, nervous way.

"There was blood upon the stairs to-night, I suppose, when you came up?"

"Upon the stairs? Why—no!"

"No! Are you sure?"

"Quite."

"No blood!" he kept repeating. "It is very strange. It is all because I did not go myself. If I had been out, I should have cut her throat from ear to ear, you know; and that would have made a beautiful path to walk in."

I nodded, though my heart died within me.

"You know, her blood is like carmine," he went on. "I cut her once—before she put me here—and you might have painted a house with it. You would be charmed with the color—would you not?"

"No doubt, sir."

"Well, then—I promise you some. I can find my way to her, only you must lead me through the passage. I can't go through there alone—I always see him if I do."

"Who?"

"Charles—my brother Charles, you know. It is very odd," he added, in an injured tone: "the minister said he was in heaven; and if that is the case, I don't see why he should always stay in that passage, and keep me from going out."

"Shall I go and see if he is there now?" I said, fancying a chance of escape.

"No!" he answered, in a terrible voice, while his eyes began to gleam. "On second thoughts I will not go to her—she shall come to us. I know how I can bring her."

He snatched up the lamp I had left on the floor, and held it so that the flame touched the padding of the wall. In another moment it would have been on fire, but the real danger drove the imaginary one out of my head, and I sprang upon him. He dropped the lamp, and caught me in his powerful arms; I managed to trample out the flame, and then gave all my strength to the task of keeping his talon-like fingers from my throat. Up and down the padded room we struggled, fighting for life and death, yet making no noise, and uttering no cry. The stillness terrified me. What would I not have given to have heard the sharp bark of Towser below!

It seemed an hour—I suppose it was not really more than five minutes. But the maniac's strength seemed to increase as mine gave way; he held one of my hands behind me, and though I kept him off for a time with the other, he fastened upon my throat at last. We had struggled down to the barred door—it was not quite shut, and in utter desperation I screamed aloud for help. The maniac ground his teeth, and uttered a strange cry—the blood rushed to my head, as his cold hands tightened around my neck; my eyes seemed starting from their sockets. I was just gasping out a last prayer for mercy, when I heard a noise upon the stairs—the door was burst open—the great dog flew in with a low growl, and after him came Jim, who flung himself upon the madman, and loosened his grasp in an instant. I saw no more, for I went into a long swoon that was almost like death.

When, with much pain and anguish, sense and reason came back to me, I opened my eyes and found Jim bending over me, bathing my lips and temples with brandy and water. I was lying upon the kitchen settle—the gray dawn was stealing through the window, and Towser sat bolt upright in the middle of the floor, watching for my recovery with an anxious eye. He whined and wagged his bushy tail when I spoke. Jim held the brandy to my lips; he was pale, and a contused mark over his eye showed that he had not rescued me without danger on his part.

"In the name of Heaven, who was it Jim?" I asked.

"Take some more brandy, sir. How in the world did you come to be in there with him?"

I told him how the outer door was ajar, and how the other one had been opened for me. He gave a long, low whistle, and shook his head.

"It's missus's fault—and I often tells her we shall all be killed in our beds some night, if she will go on visiting him. It always drives him wild. And to-night she must have gone off crying, as she often do, poor thing—and so forgotten to see that the doors were quite safe. It's a living mercy I heard you, sir."

"But who is he, Jim? And why is he here, instead of being in a proper mad-house?"

"That's her fault, too, as I tells her often enough. You see, sir, he was taken this way not long after they were married——"

"Good heavens, is he her husband?"

"Yes sir—I may say it to you—though every one else thinks he's dead. Except the parson. He knows. And the doctor. He knows too. It's a long story, and not over and above pleasant. He went mad two years after she married him, and killed his brother Charles—leastways he stabbed him in that little passage, and he never got over it. But it was all hushed up—and people thought he was sent away to a mad house. Afterwards they thought he died. But missis had that room fitted up, and has always kept him here. I mean to see to the bolts myself after this. He's fast enough now—and I've got the key of the passage in my pocket. I'm main glad missis didn't hear you though."

"And so am I. But Jim I wouldn't stay under the same roof with him another night for millions."

He smiled.

"Oh its nothing when one gets used to it. Look at missis. Who would fancy she had got a raving maniac in charge."

Who indeed? I drank some more brandy, and going up to my own room, packed up my portmanteau, and prepared for my journey. At seven I came into the breakfast-room, and lo! there was Mrs. Ball, fresh and smiling as the morning, hovering about me with a thousand attentions, little dreaming that I had by chance discovered the tragedy of her life, and nearly paid my own in forfeit thereby. I shook hands with her as Jim brought around the fly, and looked at her wonderingly, waving her 'kerchief, and smiling as gaily as a girl, when we drove away. Jim looked at her too—then at me—and whistled "Jock o' Hazledeen."

"Strange things happen every day if we only knew them," he said, as he acknowledged the gratuity I presented him at the station. "But for all that, I hopes we shall see you and Muster Hartington too next summer. I'll take care you'll not be troubled yonder again."

But I never went. One visit to Deepwater was quite enough for me!

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

The sun sinks, and the earth closes her great eye like that of a dying god. Then the hills smoke like altars; out of every wood ascends a chorus; the veils of day, the shadows, float around the enkindled transparent tree-tops, and fall upon the gay, gem-like flowers. And the burnished gold of the west throws back a dead gold on the east, and tinges with resy light the hovering breast of the tremulous lark, the evening bell of nature.

If you have the feeling of hate or revenge, subject it to a severe process of mental chemistry, examine into its nature, its uses, its philosophy, and, before you have finished the scrutiny, it will probably vanish like a volatile substance into the air.

Most thoughtful men have probably some dark fountains in their souls, by the side of which, if there were time, and it were decorous, they could let their thoughts sit down and wail indefinitely.

Great thoughts are not produced amid noise and mirth: the mind's thunderbolts, like the cloud's, are forged in silence and darkness.

It sometimes seems to us that men are ironically called human beings, because they are of all beings the most inhuman.

Even if a woman had as many locks upon her heart as she has upon her head, a cunning rogue would find his way into it.

Perhaps, after all, the truest philanthropists, the dearest lovers of our race, are the fleas, musquitoes, and South Sea islanders.

An English paper says that some miners have found silver on one of the slopes of Mt. Parnassus. They are more successful than most of the poets have been.

If you cannot have friends without continually cultivating them, the crop may not be worth the trouble.

We should use our cunning as we do our courage—always have it ready to defend ourselves, never to offend others.

There seems to be little practical difference between the friend who does you no good and the enemy who does you no harm.

One solitary philosopher may be great, virtuous and happy in the depths of poverty, but not a whole people.

One great reason why men practice so little generosity in the world is that they find so little there—it is catching.

There is as great a difference between what an ambitious man is and what he aspires to be, as between what a vain one is and what he thinks himself.

Generally the difficulty with those who complain of the want of language to express their ideas is the want of ideas to express.

Almost every poet expresses an anxious desire to escape from the city. Generally the city has no objections.

If the world is to be held together by falsehoods, the old, which are already current, are just as good as the new.

Most ladies never realize the full beauty of the painter's art until they have their portraits taken.

Never waste a long explanation upon one who cannot take a hint.

Observers may be considered as consisting of two classes—a few gazers and a great many gapers.

Many a vain head diffuses less light than a pumpkin shell with a tallow candle in it.

The sense that men can least afford to dispense with is the sense of shame.

A man behind the times is apt to speak ill ot them. Probably they don't look well from behind.

It is better for a lady to be able to make good rolls in the kitchen than at the nine-pin alley.

The first human sin was improper indulgence in eating, and it has been one of the chief sins ever since.

Ladies, don't raise your voices. Your tones are naturally several octaves higher than ours.

Any merchant may make his house a *custom house* by attention to its *duties*.

It requires great virtue to support bad fortune—far greater to support good.

Some minds will always be slow till you cut them to the quick.

The youth of friendship is better than its old age.

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CURRENT ITEMS.

At a rat-killing contest, which came off in a low den in this city a few nights ago, a number of the rowdy spectators got into an affray, and fought like wild beasts for over half an hour, kicking, biting and gouging each other without regard to consequences. One man had his nose bitten off, another lost a part of his left ear, and a third had his eyes incurably injured by gouging.

A couple of good-looking girls, not over fourteen years of age, invited a man to enter a drinking saloon in Albany with them, one day recently, and having plied him with hot punch till he became insensible, they robbed him of his gold watch, purse, rings, and everything portable and valuable that he had about him.

A house was discovered to be on fire on the outskirts of Lynn, Mass., one morning not long since, and the people who first arrived at the spot found the owner of the burning dwelling lying drunk by the side of it, and affectionately holding a brown stone jug in his arms.

A Massachusetts paper says that a wife, *fourteen years of age*, not long since applied for a divorce, to a court of that State, after a month's trial of matrimony, on the ground that she was too young and wanted to go back to her mother, and that "the court heard and granted her prayer."

A peddler was attacked near Trenton, N. J., one afternoon recently, by three highwaymen, who knocked him down, and robbed him of all his money and jewelry; but luckily the police immediately got upon their track, and arrested all three of them before night.

A man who stole a lumber wagon in Chelsea, Mass., in the summer of 1856, was recently caught in Boston one Monday night, and tried for the crime, convicted and sentenced to three months' imprisonment, on the following Wednesday.

A girl in Oregon was nearly killed, a short time since, by using a loaded gunbarrel for a poker. The charge becoming ignited, the weapon was discharged, and the contents cut the hair from one side of her head, and terribly lacerated her cheek.

A pickpocket is said to have been doing a good business on the lines of railroad out West, by going into a car, refusing to pay his fare, and picking the conductor's pocket as he is putting him off.

They have had rain of a blood red color in Central Italy on three occasions within a late period and the phenomena are regarded as auguring much bloodshed during the present year.

Three men and their wives got into a fight recently near a limekiln in Yardleville, N. J., and getting all clinched together, they fell into the kiln and were burned to death.

A popular *danseuse* was recently discovered by *three husbands* to be a bigamist, as they all happened to meet at her house the same evening, while she was out, and compared notes.

A man named Adams was shot and robbed near New Canton, Va., a short time since, by a man and his wife, who had first given him a breakfast.

A washerwoman, while hanging out clothes on the roof of a house in Grand street, went too near the eaves, lost her balance, and was fatally injured.

An aged farmer, who had been to market, was found frozen to death, with a jug of whiskey by his side, near Ashtabula, O., one morning a short time since.

An old man, living at Raymond, Miss., "having become troubled about affairs in general," lately blew out his brains.

A man in Boston recently recovered one hundred and seventy-five dollars of the owner of a dog which had bitten him.

It is stated that more than half the convicts in the Massachusetts State Prison are under twenty-six years of age.

The ice-houses on the Hudson river have harvested a crop of four hundred thousand tons of ice this season.

Six children, all of one family, recently died in a Pennsylvania village within a week, of diptheria.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

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SOFT PEOPLE.

Nothing is harder to hit than the happy medium. Some people have such an intense and sleepless sense of their own rights, that they are always in hot water, always eager in redressing some real or fancied wrong. Others, again, are morbidly sympathetic and weakly generous. They have an intuitive perception of the feelings of other people, and an instinctive desire to gratify those feelings. They are continually making victims of themselves. They cannot say, no. If their own rights and the rights of another come in conflict, they yield their own rights at once. No matter who treads on their toes, and no matter how hard the heel, they are always ready to say with Mr. Toots, "It's of no consequence." This curious habit of mind arises, sometimes, from the will having been crushed by unskillful severity in childhood; sometimes, from a defective organization; sometimes, from an extreme abhorrence of selfishness; sometimes, from incorrect conceptions of religious duty. The command which reads, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," these people interpret thus: I must love my neighbor exceedingly, and myself not at all.

These soft and sympathetic souls, probably, do more harm in the world than any other class of virtuous people. The most pugnacious stick-to-rights, though he certainly does give the public a great deal of trouble, is, upon the whole, a useful person. He makes other people very careful to observe the rights of their fellows. In fact, our soft friends themselves could not get on at all, but for the aid of those who will *not* be imposed upon. For example: It is a trick of some of the lower class of newsboys to startle a quiet street, late in the evening, by suddenly crying an Extra, with important news. People rush to the sidewalk and buy old newspapers, which the young rascals have taken that mode of getting rid of at six cents each. Now, your easy-goer laughs at the imposition, and tells the story the next day as a good joke. Not so old Stick-to-Rights. He seizes his hat and gives chase; gets back his sixpence, collars his boy, and hands him over to the next policeman. In other words, he gives a valuable lesson to newsboys, confers a great benefit upon the public, and contributes his part toward the general practice of honesty. And this kind of protection the man who will not be imposed upon is continually affording the class represented by the celebrated Mr. Toots. Yet it is Stick-to-Rights who is called a hard man, an unfeeling brute, an incarnation of selfishness; while his soft neighbor is supposed to be the most "amiable" of men.

"If you make a sheep of yourself," said old Dr. Franklin, "the wolves will devour you." No man has a right to give such encouragement to wolves. Wolves are the common enemy. To overcome such wolves a man must make a dog of himself. Then they will not be apt to molest him, and the opinion will spread among beasts of prey, that it is better to let alone a class of creatures who can be lambs to one another, but bull-dogs to those who attack them.

Old Hickory's rule is a safe one to follow: Ask nothing but what is right; submit to nothing that is wrong.

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OCEAN STEAMERS.

It has been well observed that of all people possessing health and sanity, the most entirely helpless are a crowd of landsmen when passengers at sea. The more reason, therefore, that they should be under proper guardianship and protection. That this is not the case is self-evident from the large number of casualties on board sea-going steamers, referable solely to a want of both. In the first place, the existing laws fall short of their purpose. They provide no adequate means of extinguishing fires; none for speedily freeing a ship from water, in case of leakage. In fact, with the single exception of the legislation designed to prevent explosion, the passengers on board ocean steamships are pretty much at the mercy of the owners.

Not more than a year ago, the Northern Light, on her way from Panama, came within an ace of being burned, in consequence of some clothing hanging in a state-room having taken fire from an unprotected lamp. On board that vessel were *seven hundred* souls; but only *seven* boats, capable of sustaining twenty persons each. "I thought," says an able writer on ocean steam navigation, who was on board at the time, "of the Central America, which thereabouts went down with three hundred and fifty passengers, and of James Birch, the California stage proprietor. The boats had left the ship with all they could carry (*all* the women and children, to the eternal glory of the brave men who remained behind be it spoken), and the crazy craft was settling down into her salt tomb. 'Come, Birch,' said one, 'get a life-preserver.' 'No,' said he, 'it is useless;' and lighting his last cigar, he sat down, waiting with heroic calm until the waters gathered over him."

All men, however, are not so self-sacrificing as were those on the Central America, and we sometimes hear of women and children being trampled down and abandoned in the panic occasioned by a fire on shipboard. Had the Northern Light been burnt, five hundred and sixty persons would have perished for want of boats!

There is no good reason why a steamship should be consumed at sea. Every steamer should be provided with engines for raising water, of sufficient capacity to flood a fire in any portion of her bulk within fifteen or twenty minutes. These engines should be capable of being attached to the engines of the vessel almost instantaneously, and few if any cases would happen where the boilers could not be kept going until the flames were subdued.

It is expected that the subject will be brought up at the next session of Congress by the senators and representatives from the Pacific States, and that some rational law for the protection of steamboat passengers—a law drafted under the advice of competent engineers and covering all the points of danger—will be submitted and carried through, in spite of any efforts that may be made to prevent such a consummation, on the part of owners, whose pockets it might chance to touch.

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SPORTS OF OUR CITY RULERS.

Among the intellectual amusements patronized by some of our legislators and magistrates, are the fighting of game fowls, fighting of dogs, and rat worryings, and there is reason to believe that if these worthy magnates were not prevented by the interference of the police, they would still more frequently indulge in such classical pastimes. Twice within a few weeks, convocations of these excellent men and their constituents, have been interrupted in sports of this description, and compelled to postpone the decision of their bets to a more convenient opportunity. Still later a sheep skinning match "came off," as the phrase is, at one of the notorious sporting houses with which our city is infested; but whether this last affair was under the patronage of the authorities or not we are unable to say. As the sheep were not skinned alive, but the contest was merely between men who prepare animals for market, and was therefore in some sort a trial of skill in a useful and necessary art, it is probable that the city functionaries had nothing to do with it. They seem to prefer something more exciting—such as the disfeathering and spurring to pieces of live fowls, duellos between fierce dogs, and, though last, not least, the fleecing and flaying of the public.

Among the semi-barbarians of the nail-making districts in Lancashire, England, prevails a pleasant recreation known as "mumbling a sparrow." Two fellows make a bet of a gallon of beer or so, that each will devour a living sparrow, feathers and all, before the other, and the feat is performed to the great delectation of the bystanders. But then it must be remembered that the sparrow-mumblers and the spectators are boors of the lowest description—fellows who cannot read or write. Yet it seems to us that on that very account they are more excusable than the class of men in this enlightened community, who patronize equally discreditable and brutal exhibitions. When individuals who make and should administer the laws, habitually and boldly violate them, what can be expected but general demoralization?

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SAILORS' RIGHTS.

Is it necessary to give to the officers of merchant vessels the right to inflict corporeal punishment upon sailors? No reader of newspapers needs to be told how frequently such punishment is inflicted, nor with what aggravations of cruelty and insult. We do not believe in the necessity. We believe the practice to be an unmitigated evil, and an evil greater than any that could arise from its abolition. This subject is constantly brought to our notice by our receiving letters from boys desirous to go before the mast, who write for advice how to proceed. We seldom reply to such letters, because we cannot conscientiously recommend any one to embark in a service which will render him liable to torture and degradation at the hands of arbitrary captains and brutal mates. We cannot advise an honest lad from the country, accustomed to be treated as a human being, to place himself in a situation in which he may be knocked down with a belaying pin, hung up by the wrists, or lashed with a rope's end. It is the nature of all wrong to create for itself a seeming necessity. The very fact that sailors may be struck keeps out of the forecastle all the best men, and makes those who are already in it worse than they naturally would be, by annihilating their self-respect. Once let it be known that a sailor is as completely protected from insult and violence by the laws of his country as any other citizen, and a better class of boys and men would hasten to embrace that manly and noble vocation. This is a matter of the first importance. The master-states of the world have all been powerful upon the sea; for it is only the great races that produce the men who delight in the sublime perils of navigation, and who are stout enough of heart and limb to subdue the waves and put the winds in harness. The sailor should rather be the special care and darling of the law, than its victim. It concerns our honor and our greatness, that he should be as completely protected from arrogance and cruelty in the most remote seas, as he was in his native village.

◆

SLOW AND SURE.

The river Amazon, the longest river in the world, and which discharges into the sea the largest quantity of water, is, at the same time, the slowest. It falls but one foot in fifty miles, yet it would be just as difficult to stop its course, or prevent its flowing into the ocean, as it would to dam up the Niagara. That one foot in fifty miles is just as good as though it were a hundred. What an image the mighty flood presents of a resolute will determined to accomplish a certain pupose; let but the will be formed, and it matters little how slow the means may be, the object will be accomplished sooner or later. In these fast days, when everything seems to have received a sudden impetus, and great enterprizes are taken up and executed with a flash, it is very well to bear in mind that the greatest things that have been accomplished in the world have been done by slow and patient movements. The brilliant result may have suddenly burst upon the world, but the processes by which it was accomplished, have been deliberately planned and slowly executed. The electric telegraph is now the type of rapidity; but consider by what slow and patient steps it was brought to perfection. It took a full hundred years of plodding thought, of patient experiment, of slow, deliberate movements to reach that ultimatum of rapid progress. There are no great things done in a hurry. It is a very good thing to be fast, when, as Davy Crockett said, you are sure you are right. But it is much better to be slow and sure, for then there will be no danger of overshooting your mark.

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A MYSTERIOUS AFFAIR.

A gentleman recently informed us, that he was coming from the upper part of the city in a a Fifth Avenue omnibus, about 10 o'clock one evening, not long since, and that just as the vehicle was crossing Fourteenth street, the passengers were startled by the shriek of a lady on the corner, and the cry, "Stop him! There he goes! Stop him!" The omnibus was stopped, and several passengers getting out, found a highly respectable looking gentleman, lying on the pavement, stabbed in the breast. Blood was freely flowing from the wound, and also issuing from his mouth. A lady was standing by his side, *who seemed anxious to avoid recognition.* The police soon took the wounded person in charge and conveyed him away. On investigation it transpired that this was simply a "domestic affair," with a lady in it, which the parties interested have found it judicious to hush up.

A PRIVATEER'S STORY.

The following singular night adventure in the harbor of St. George Town, in the island of Grenada, and the narrow escape from capture of that noted privateer, the "Yankee," of Bristol, R. I., has never before, to my knowledge, been recorded, save in the log book of that fortunate little cruiser.

I will therefore tell the story in the words of her brave old commander, as I gathered it from his own lips.

"It was in the last week of December, 1812," said Captain Wilson, "and while running up to the Havana, that we fell in with a Newport cruiser, who reported that the island of Grenada, or rather the port of St. George Town, was at that moment in the occupancy of the Americans. That he had sailed from the place only two days before, and left in the harbor one of our frigates and two sloops of war, while the stripes and stars were flying from the flag-staff of the old fort. The same day I boarded a Spanish droger, the skipper of which had seen the vessels of war sailing into the British port at the time stated by the privateersman.

What object our fleet could have had in taking formal possession of this insignificant place, I could not imagine, unless it was for the sake of obtaining fresh supplies. At all events, I was glad to hear of it, as I was myself in need of provisions. I concluded to make the harbor, and purchase such supplies as I might require.

It was night before we made the land; but as I was acquainted with the entrance of the harbor of St. George Town, I did not fire a gun for a pilot, but kept boldly on into the outer port.

The night was quite dark, and a hazy mist hanging over the water rendered the obscurity so great that no object could be perceived a couple of cable lengths off. My sharpest sighted youngsters were constantly on the look-out, but no vessels were to be seen, as we glided slowly and silently past the shore batteries, and the fort beyond, into the smooth water of the inner bay.

As we reached this point, the haze lifting a little, showed us, at a little distance, the faint outlines of a large ship, which I doubted not was the American frigate; and a little beyond several other smaller vessels could be distinguished.

Scarcely had we made this discovery, than the people on board this ship were made aware of our approach, and hailed us, inquiring who we were.

"The American privateer Yankee!" I replied. "What ship is that?"

No answer was returned; and supposing that my question was not heard, I waited till we had run farther into the harbor before I repeated it.

We had passed between the fort and the ship, and were in the act of clewing up, when a voice from the other vessel cried out: "Luff! Luff, there—the privateer!"

Supposing, naturally enough, that we were running into shoal water, I shouted to the man at the wheel:

"Hard down your helm!"

"Aye! aye! sir!"

Scarcely was the order obeyed, than the schooner, answering to the helm, snubbed her bows deep and fast into a sand bank, where she remained immovable.

This of course immediately excited our suspicions, that all was not right; for the pretended caution, to "luff," was doubtlessly given to produce exactly the result it had.

"I'm afraid, sir," said my first officer, stepping to my side, and speaking low, "that we are now really in for it! That ship, sir, is an Englishman, or I'm greatly mistaken."

"I've no doubt of it myself, sir, now. The treacherous knave has got us into a scrape, by that rascally signal. But she's probably a prize of the American frigate, and is now lying under her guns.

"But it's strange though, that a prisoner should be permitted to mislead a vessel entering port."

At this moment a boat was seen to leave the ship, and pulling a good distance round our stern, make directly for the mole under the fort.

Scarcely ten minutes elapsed after the landing of the boat, when all was commotion in the fort. The drums beat to quarters, and men with lanterns were running in every direction, while we could also perceive that the crew of the ship near us were silently preparing to drop from their berth. We could hear the sounds of their capstan bars as they shipped and unshipped them, in the act of heaving home the anchor.

While this was doing, we were by no means idle; for now certain that mischief was really intended, our little crew, greatly reduced, to man the various prizes we had sent home during our heretofore successful cruise, were called to quarters, and all were ready to act as the emergency might require.

In the meantime, a boat left the ship, and approaching the schooner, the crew attempted to climb up our side. But I kept them at bay, while I demanded to know where the American frigate lay.

"She sailed yesterday," was the answer.

"And the sloops-of-war?" I inquired.

"They all left the port together," replied the officer.

"What ship is that?" I next asked.

"The Marquis of Durham," answered the man. "The port is now in the possession of His Majesty's troops, and I demand your surrender. You have fifteen minutes to deliver your sword in person to the commandant of the castle. On the expiration of that time, if the summons is not obeyed, the batteries will be opened upon you!"

"Come on board," said I; and as the skipper of the merchant-ship and the boat's crew reached the deck, I ordered them under arrest. From these men we learned the facts, which were these:—The little squadron of American men-of-war had merely entered the port for supplies, the batteries not being sufficiently manned to prevent their entrance. The little garrison had escaped to the hills, till the sailing of the ships, when they again returned and took up their old quarters. The large merchant ship, we had mistaken in the obscurity for the American frigate, had arrived that afternoon, having outsailed the convoyed squadron of British West Indiamen, to which she belonged.

We now perceived that the object of the British merchantman was to drop out of range of the guns of the fort, while we should remain fast grounded on the shoal, and exposed to their shots, when the first discharge from their heavy cannon would have knocked us into splinters.

Every man on board was aware of the imminent danger we were in, but they were brave fellows, and waited as coolly for my orders, as if we had been at sea, and in pursuit of a chase.

"That fellow yonder, sir, is dropping from his berth," said one of my officers.

I looked toward the Englishman and could see that she had hove home her anchor; and boats were out with a line, hauling her head round towards the outer harbor; the other craft in the harbor beyond, were also evidently in motion.

"Get out the boats, Mr. Richmond," said I to my first mate; "we'll overhaul that chap. There's but one chance left for us. We'll have to leave the schooner to her fate, and transfer our people to that vessel. Possibly we may do so before the fort opens upon us. Get all hands ready for boarding!"

Hardly was the order communicated to the men, than with a cheer, they sprang into the boats, and were ready to pull away for the merchantman.

But at that instant, as good fortune would have it, a sudden flaw of wind from the land struck our sails. The little vessel yielded to the breeze; and careening sufficiently to clear her keel from the sand, floated immediately into deep water.

A loud huzza now broke from the men, which, regardless of the consequences to the shipping beyond us, provoked a shot from the castle, which passed harmlessly over our stern.

"Away! my hearties!" I shouted to the boarders. "Get possession of the Englishman, and all will be right!"

While the boats were pulling in the direction of the ship, the schooner, under the influence of the freshening breeze, bore down upon them; and as the boarders clambered up the side of the English vessel, upon the larboard, the privateer ran into the main rigging on the starboard side, thus bringing her between us and the guns of the castle.

I knew that all the fortifications of the port were upon that side of the harbor, and intended to keep under the shelter of the ship till beyond the range of the guns of the shore batteries, as well as those of the castle, as the main fort was called.

We obtained possession of the ship without a struggle, and forcing the English sailors to assist in the working of the ship, soon got up the sails and were running through the outer harbor before the enemy suspected the ruse we were playing.

In the meantime the fortunate land breeze, which was bearing us from the dangerous proximity of the shore, also lifted the vapors which had been hanging over the water and shipping, showing to the astonished, and doubtless greatly chagrined people of the place, that not only had the ship changed her position, but the privateer also. The latter, they had no doubt, was fast aground, as had been reported to them; and when they discovered us sailing side by side out of the harbor, the truth seemed to flash upon them—the Yankee was running away with the ship.

The forts now opened upon us, and a line of fire belched forth from the castle, but without effect; as we were by this time beyond range of it. Not so, however, with the shore batteries, upon the tongue of land making out from the outer harbor, for we were scarcely a pistol shot from the mouths of their cannon; and the heavy shot struck with crushing effect into the hull, and among the spars of the prize. Occasionally one passing through the sails and rigging of the ship, would make an ugly wound in some one of our upper spars. But our hull was completely protected by the large merchantman, as our decks were scarcely on a level with her deep water-line.

The breeze continued to freshen as we ran out of the harbor, and in a few minutes we were beyond the reach of the shot; though the enemy continued much longer to pound away at us in vain.

I now boarded the prize, which had been the means of our wonderful escape. She was terribly cut up, and many of her crew were lying dead and wounded upon her decks.

While I was giving directions for the proper care of the latter, Mr Richmond, who had been examining the condition of the hull, came to me and reported that the ship was sinking

We lost no time in hurrying the English crew, with their effects, on board the privateer; and scarcely had we sailed a thousand yards from the richly-freighted merchantman, when with a lurch, and a staggering motion like a drunken man, she went down, and the ocean claimed the noble prize as his own.

Four days after this singular night adventure the Yankee was snugly lying under the walls of the Moro, in the harbor of Havana.

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AN OLD LADY'S VIEWS OF MATRIMONY.

Wilds of Minnesota, *Feb. 1st*, 1861.

Mr. Bonner:—I have long been thinking of writing to you, not, however, to tell you how many bright eyes grow brighter as they eagerly watch for the coming of the Ledger. I know all this is stale news. But I cannot resist the desire to tell you how much I enjoy reading your "Notices to Correspondents," and that I *do* think, by an attentive perusal of that part of your paper, one can get more knowledge of human nature and the secret springs which govern mankind, than in any other way.

Is it possible, Mr. B., that you receive so many letters from young men, saying "they are courted by anxious mammas, and are such especial favorites with ladies, that when they pay attention to one ,many others are jealous." Oh! the vanity of *your* sex! I cannot understand why these things should be spoken of so differently from what they were in *my* young days. Your sensible answers certainly evince a just and true appreciation of woman.

Mr. Bonner, *do* have patience with an old woman, and permit her to ask you, Whence arose this *misapprehension* (as it seems to her) of the *value* of women as *wives?* Is it not because they do not set a *just estimate* upon *themselves?* Else why do we hear some speaking of girls *getting* husbands, as though it were some wonderful elevation and good fortune, that *all* need not even hope to attain to, and *none* were *really* worthy of!! Now, inasmuch as women are generally believed to be equal to men (if not always in native sense and mental endowments), at least in those gentler graces most likely to make *others* happy—such as patience, forbearance, good-temper, gentleness, loving kindness, and untiring devotion to the object of their affections,—*is it* not *quite* as much of an object, and *quite as* much of a favor, for any man to win and secure as a wife a true, virtuous, and loving woman, as for *her* to get him for a husband?

And now, *dear* girls, permit one (who, although in the evening of life, can look back on many years of wedded bliss—believes she would, in single life, have been neither lonely or miserable,) to give you, with her old goose-quill, just *one word* of advice: *Don't* learn to regard matrimony as the *chief* or *principal* object in life, or the *only* road to happiness. (*Don't* write any letters to Mr. Bonner on this subject that will evince any *undue* anxiety), but look upon it as an accidental thing, which the Giver of all Good *may* or may not send, as *He* sees best for you. Learn to be happy in the happiness you can to others give, and *never* "unsought be won."

Yours very truly, Mrs. M—— P——.

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TO THE POLICE COMMISSIONERS.

We desire to call the attention of the proper authorities to the assemblage of "roughs" almost always congregated in front of the manifest bar-room in what is known as the "Times Building." We, in common with others who have business to transact in the neighborhood, are very much annoyed by the rowdies who are constantly grouped on the sidewalk, using profane language, smoking strong cigars, their breath reeking with the fumes of liquor, incommoding the public traffic, and their presence rendering the whole vicinity exceedingly disagreeable. Ought not such a state of things to be abated as a nuisance?

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Silverthorne; or, *The Heirs of Cheswold Manor.*—In this story Mr. Cobb has struck an entirely new vein. The scene is laid in a region in which adventure and romance spontaneously spring up; and the teeming incidents of the narrative are woven by Mr. Cobb's practiced hand into a plot of unusual interest and power. The opening chapters will be found on our first page.

THOUGHTS AS THEY OCCUR.—No. 83.

BY ONE WHO KEEPS HIS EYES AND EARS OPEN.

You must take great satisfaction at those windows of yours, Mr. Bonner, looking out over the Park, the Fountain, (praised be its dryness!) the City Hall and the Astor House. But do you not know that the short days grow shorter no longer? Do you not know that the days have an hour strung on, a new pearl at each end of the string? It is light now at the hour of the morning when, giving our first turn over, it was, a month ago, dark! On reaching the city six weeks ago, at five, the sun had gone down, and all the gas was blazing. But now the sun pours, yet, its welcome light. Ah! these lengthening days! They put new spirit in the veins! The shortening days seem walking to a burial; the lengthening days seem walking to a resurrection. The waning year—we cannot help it—the waning year brings some sadness. It tells of summer gone, of pleasure past, of harvests gathered, of beauty passed, of the *end* of things! And yet winter is fair, is beautiful, full of frolics, full of grim glories, with long nights for household gatherings, for reading, for festive frolics, for apple-parings, huskings, or candy-pullings, for gamesomeness and jollity, that make the old young again, and sweep from the young all thought of green fields and blossoming trees; for the winter's mistletoe has often greeted lovers with more sentiment and secret joy, than the hawthorn-blooming bough, or autumn asters! And yet, in spite of all, there it is! The sun rises late. The sun goes down early. The daylight is a mere isthmus between two great oceans of darkness! Nothing grows. The earth is frozen. Streams are hidden, or are black-faced and sullen. We go to the old haunts with a shiver. Did we ever sit by these walls, now bedded deep in snow? Is it a dream, that by this huge rock we sat and saw the sun go down, and drank in all the influences of evening? There, where flocks of birds used to rise up, as we came, nothing moves, but the swirls of snow. Sleek cattle are now rough, and crumpled up, and stand on the sunny side of the barn, the very images of patience. The very hens are silent, and hold up one foot under their feathery petticoat, as if they could afford but one cold foot at a time. And even that most astonishing, and never enough to be celebrated event in a hen's life—the laying of an egg, comes off in winter without eloquence, and as a mere matter of fact, interesting to the family, but not, as in summer, to be chanted all over the neighborhood, by cock, dame, and pullet.

Yes, short days growing shorter! They keep the soul in humble and meditating mood. We stand to see the forces of nature move on without our meddling. Winter has its own way.

But, slowly, very slowly, new minutes begin to linger in the west! Just a strip of darkness is trimmed off from the morning edge. We scarcely notice them. Only when they come to the bulk of an hour do we begin to mark the added minutes!

Then two hours! Ah, it is near to March! Winter is going. Longer and longer grow the bright days! They are throwing off their weeds of mourning! They are more galiy dressed at every month.

Do you not hear that the river has broken up at Albany? What does that predict? It is the first insurrection against winter The river has roused its forces to cast off the Despotism. Frosts may yet do much, but the ice period is passed—or fast passing.

Now, watch for the signs! What countless multitudes of crows are congregating along the flats of the Delaware! Black, are they? Hoarse and ungainly? But they are symptoms! They tell what is in the wind. It is February 14th. Blue-birds must have started northward from Alabama and Louisiana. Robins begin to cock their eye northward! It will not be long before long lines of duck will be seen streaming, far up in the air, toward Labrador!

In fact, I feel myself to be sprouting. I am thawed out, and my summer feelings are swelling in the bud! Every time I leave the city I see new signs. Yesterday I saw green grass in spots along the road. The tips of many shrubs in the swamp have already changed color. This morning sparrows appeared. I am only waiting to see a plough in the furrow, to feel that the enemy is routed—the victory won.

Indeed, I hear that calves are come. There are lambs already dropped. Little dainty pigs are beginning to squeel around in the straw. The barn grows more vocal. Hens are bustling about as if a new concern were agitating their tender bosoms. Indeed, the winter is gone, and before these lines are read the Spring will have come. All hail roaming, windy March! We love you not for what you are, but for the months that you bring behind you!

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PLEASANT NEIGHBORHOODS.

One's pleasure after all is much affected by the quality of one's neighbors, even though one may not be on speaking terms with them. A pleasant, bright face at a window, is surely better than a discontented cross one; and a house that has the air of being inhabited is preferable to closed shutters and unsocial blinds, excluding every ray of sunlight and sympathy. We like to see the glancing, cheerful lights through the windows of a cold night; or watch them as evening deepens, gradually creeping from the parlor to the upper stories of the houses near us. We like to watch the little children go in and out the door, to play or to school. We like to see a white-robed baby dancing up and down at the window in its mother's arms, or the father reading his newspaper there at evening, or any of these cheerful, impromptu home-glimpses, which, though we are no Paul Pry, we will assert go to make a pleasant neighborhood to those who live for comfort instead of show. Sad indeed some morning, on waking, is it to see a black crape fluttering from the door-handle, and know that death's angel, while it spared our threshold, has crossed that of our cheerful neighbor. Sad to miss the white-robed baby from the window, and see the little coffin at nightfall borne into the house. Sad to see innocent little faces pressed at evening against the window-pane, watching for the "dear papa" who has gone to his long home.

Fanny Fern.

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THE TIME FOR FRIENDSHIP.

It is curious to think how indifferent are some people to those atmospherical changes, which so signally affect the health and temper of others. You will see one man of a rainy day, or a cold day, so transformed from good-nature to acidity and bitterness that his best friends would fain get out of his way—at least till the "wind changes." Those of less sensitive organization have little patience and less pity, for what they cannot understand; yet this unfortunate class are not for that reason to be shut out in the cold till they "come to." A little sympathy—some cheerful topic of conversation adroitly introduced—some pleasing little personal attention at the right moment—and, lo! the mental clouds disperse, and all again is sunshine. Surely, love and friendship *should* be capable of this—surely they should be true in sadness as in mirth.

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Rejected Manuscripts.—We will not return rejected manuscripts.

LOVE AND LAW

A LEGEND OF BOSTON

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

I.

Jack Newman was in love, a common case
With boys just verging upon manhood's prime,
When every damsel with a pretty face
Seems some bright creature from a purer clime.
Sent by the gods to bless a country town;
A pink-cheeked angel in a gingham gown.

II.

Jack was in love; and also much in doubt,
(As thoughtful lovers oft have been before,)
If it were better to be in or out,—
Such pain alloyed his bliss. On reason's score,
Perhaps 'tis equally a sin to get
Too deep in love, in liquor, or in debt.

III.

The lady of his love, Miss Mary *Blank*,
(I call her so to hide her real name,)
Was fair and twenty, and in social rank,—
That is, in riches,—much above her "flame;"
The daughter of a person who had tin,
Already won; while Jack had his to win.

IV.

Her father was a lawyer; rather rusty
In legal lore, but one who well had striven
In former days to swell his "*res angustæ*"
To broad possessions; and, in short, had thriven
Bravely in his vocation; though, the fact is,
More by his "practices" ('twas said) than practice!

V.

A famous man was *Blank* for sound advice
In doubtful cases; for example, where
The point in question is extremely nice,
And turns upon the section of a hair;
Or where—which seems a very common bother,—
Justice looks one way, and the Law, another.

VI.

Great was his skill to make or mar a plot;
To prop, at need, a rotten reputation,
Or undermine a good one; he had got
By heart the subtle science of evasion,
And knew the useful art to pick a flaw
Through which a rascal might escape the law.

VII.

Jack was his pupil; and 'tis rather queer
So shrewd a counsellor did not discover,
With all his cunning both of eye and ear,
That this same pupil was his daughter's lover;
And—what would much have shocked his legal tutor—
Was even now the girl's accepted suitor!

VIII.

Fearing a *non-suit*, if the lawyer knew
The case too soon, Jack kept it to himself;
(And, stranger still, the lady kept it too)
For well he knew the father's pride of pelf,
Should e'en a bare suspicion cross his mind,
Would soon abate the action they designed.

IX.

For Jack was impecunious; and *Blank*
Had small regard for people who were poor;
Riches to him were beauty, grace and rank:
In short, the man was one of many more
Who worship money-bags and those who own 'em,
And think a handsome sum the *summum bonum!*

X.

I'm fond of civil words, and do not wish
To be satirical, but none despise
The poor so truly as the *noveaux riche;*
And here, no doubt, the real reason lies,
That being over-proud of what they are,
They're naturally ashamed of what they were!

XI.

Certain to meet the father's cold negation,
Jack dare not ask him for his daughter's hand;
What should he do? Twas surely an occasion
For all the wit a lover might command;
At last he chose (it seemed his only hope)
That final card of Cupid—to elope!

XII.

A pretty plan to please a penny-a-liner;
But far less pleasant for the leading factor.
Should the fair maiden chance to be a *minor*,
(Whom the law reckons an unwilling actor)
And here Jack found a rather sad obstruction—
He might be caught and punished for abduction!

XIII.

What could he do? Well—here is what he did,
As a "moot-case" to lawyer *Blank* he told
The whole affair, save that the names were hid·
I can't help thinking it was rather bold,
But Love is partial to heroic schemes,
And often proves much wiser than he seems.

XIV.

"The thing is safe enough, with proper care,"
Observed the lawyer, smiling—"Here's your course:—
Just let the lady manage the affair
Throughout; *Videlicet*, she gets the horse,
And mounts him, unassisted, *first;* but mind,
The woman sits before, and you, behind!

XV.

Then who is the abductor?—Just suppose
A court and jury looking at the case;
What ground of action do the facts disclose?
They find a horse—two riders—and a race—
And you "Not Guilty"; for 'tis clearly true
The dashing damsel ran away with you!"

XVI.

* * * * * * * *

XVII.

These social sins are often rather grave;
I give such deeds no countenance of mine;
Nor can I say the father e'er forgave;
But that was surely a propitious "sign,"
On which (in after years) the words I saw
Were, "Blank & Newman, Counsellors at Law!"

THE MUTE SINGER.

BY ANNA CORA RITCHIE.

CHAPTER XII.

RENUNCIATION.

The slumberous eyes of Madame de la Tour did not long remain closed to what was passing around her.

One of her beloved lap-dogs chanced to be ailing Her niece casually mentioned that Ursule professed to be acquainted with a mode of treatment which would be very beneficial to the suffering favorite. The next time that Madame de la Tour heard that Honorine was receiving her humble guests, anxiety for the health of the over-fed pet caused her to seek Ursule in Honorine's boudoir.

The apartment was empty; but through the open doors of the conservatory, she beheld Sylvie walking with the Marquis de St. Amar. Honorine, at some distance, assisted by Ursule, appeared to be securing the cage of a mocking bird to the bough from which it had accidentally been loosened.

Madame de la Tour became a looker on, unnoticed. She was struck with the deportment of her nephew towards Sylvie. She marked with what lover-like emphasis he seemed to be talking to her; how tenderly he bent over, until his breath must have fanned her cheek; with what an impassioned gaze his eyes were rivetted upon her animated countenance; and with what responsive earnestness Sylvie replied to him, sometimes by rapid and significant gestures, sometimes by tracing a few lines upon her ivory tablets. Could it be possible that the nobleman had so far forgotten himself as to be captivated by this plebeian maiden? To what disgraceful consequences might not such an attachment lead? This ill weed must be nipped in the bud before it could expand into baleful blossoms. A mode of effecting this blighting process, which was only too simple, suggested itself to the wily schemer. She would have preferred some more difficult and tortuous path, by which her talents for manœuvering might have been called into pleasant play.

Without having been seen, she noiselessly retired; and, on reaching her own apartment, rang for a servant, and ordered him to seek Ma'm'selle Valette in the conservatory, and say that his mistress desired a few moments' conversation with her.

Ursule, though not a little taken aback by this unprecedented summons, had no alternative but to obey. When she was ushered into the presence of Madame de la Tour, the latter received her with languid *hauteur*. In her composition there was a large dash of pride and pomposity, which was glossed over by her habitual apathy, until she was roused to action.

Motioning Ursule to be seated, she addressed her curtly.

"Ma'm'selle Valette, I expect the object of this interview to be kept secret—especially from my niece. Have I your word that it shall be?"

Ursule timidly replied in the affirmative.

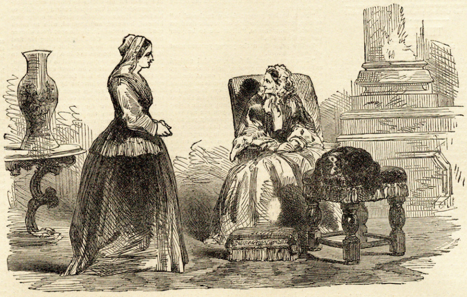
Madame de la Tour went on, as abruptly as before

"It has always been a difficult task to guide and control Mademoiselle de St. Amar. Inappropriate as was her association with a young person of Ma'm'selle Sylvie's condition in life, I allowed my niece to receive her without anticipating any unpleasant results. I have reason to believe that this unfortunate girl has been so much flattered and elated by a few unmeaning attentions bestowed upon her, chiefly through pity, by the Marquis de St. Amar, that it is necessary, for her own good, to withdraw her from further exposure to the danger of misinterpreting my nephew's courtesy."

Little cared Madame de la Tour for Sylvie's well-being, but she took her stand upon this amiable ground because it was beneath her dignity even to hint that her nephew could have been inspired with an undue interest in the lowly maiden.

Ursule was struck dumb. It had never occurred to her that Sylvie could regard one so high above her in any light that was incompatible with his rank and her humility. Now a thousand trivial incidents, which had made but little impression at the moment, rushed back into her mind, and forced the instantaneous conviction that Madame de la Tour had not arrived at an erroneous conclusion.

That lady proceeded a little more graciously, for she was flattered by the evident effect produced by her harangue.



THE MARQUIS DE ST. AMAR'S SCHEMING AUNT.

"To a person of your apparent good sense it is hardly needful for me to suggest the course which propriety demands. Your mode of action I do not dictate; I shall only look to the result, which must be a cessation of this too familiar and unmeet intercourse. Am I perfectly comprehended?"

"Perfectly, Madame·" Ursule forced herself to reply.

"Should Mademoiselle de St. Amar inquire why I sent for you, you are to understand that the object of this interview is solely to consult you about my poor little dog, who is suffering terribly. I am distressed to death about him! My niece informed me that you expressed an opinion, the other day, concerning the proper treatment of the dear little martyr; oblige me with your advice on the subject."

Madame de la Tour took her asthmatic favorite in her arms with as tender a touch as though it were a sick infant. Ursule endeavored to collect her thoughts, and communicated a prescription which had proved very salutary to canine health. Madame de la Tour was quite melted by the anticipated restoration of her curly darling. The *less* important subject, previously disposed of, appeared to have faded from her thoughts. Ursule, after giving all the medical information in her power, gladly withdrew.

With slow steps she returned to Honorine's boudoir The most sorrowful episode of her own life was rising up before her and saddening her anew. In her youth she had given her affections to one who had been forced by family considerations to offer his hand elsewhere. The very remembrance of that cruel wrenching away of the heart, which she had endured, was filled with intense anguish, and she shrank from beholding Sylvie undergoing a similar soul-convulsion.

"What did my aunt want?" inquired Honorine, the instant Ursule re-entered.

Sylvie and the Marquis were still wandering among the flowers; they had not noticed Ursule's brief absence.

"She desired to learn what opinion I had expressed to you concerning the treatment of her lap dog," was the evasive answer.

"Oh, those blessed lap dogs!" replied the unsuspecting Honorine. "If you preserve the life of one of them, Madame de la Tour will think that you deserve a pension as a public benefactor."

When Ursule and Sylvie returned home that day, the former said, with unusual gravity, as they reached her door: "Come in, Sylvie; I want to talk to you about—about—about something of importance."

Sylvie complied, with a face so bright, so full of hope, so free from care, that Ursule felt like a pitying executioner, who does not dare to withhold the blow ordered by a superior power.

She laid aside her out-of-door wrappings and sat down. Sylvie threw off her black velvet bonnet, brought a little bench to Ursule's feet, and seated herself, leaning with both arms upon her friend's lap

Ursule found it very difficult to commence a task from which there was no escape. Sylvie was too much engrossed by her own sweet thoughts to notice her troubled look.

At last Ursule said: "Sylvie, you are quite well now, are you not?"

Sylvie nodded a glad assent.

"We must wait patiently for the restoration of your voice."

Sylvie assented again. She *was* waiting patiently—hopefully—happily.

"You enjoy your visits to Mademoiselle Honorine very much, do you not?"

Sylvie's expressive look replied that no words could depict how much.

"The *Marquis* talks to you—reads to you—walks with you in that lovely conservatory—and all *that* is very delightful," resumed Ursule.

Sylvie drew a long breath, and her face was suffused with a blush of unmistakeable affirmation.

"Sylvie—my darling—forgive me! It grieves me to the heart to pain you—to *force* you to reflect—but—to what *good* can this lead? What result can you expect?"

At those soul searching questions the hot blood fled from Sylvie's cheeks and lips, as though it rushed in a lava torrent to protect her heart from some freezing clutch. With the bound of a fawn, suddenly roused from serene slumbers by a death arrow, she sprang to her feet.

The all-engrossing present had been so enchanting, that she had never once fixed her eyes upon the future.

Trembling from head to foot, she stood one moment, wildly gazing at Ursule, whose hand had unseemingly loosened the shaft by which she was transfixed, then dropped down again into her place, and buried her white visage in her compassionate torturer's lap.

How much more rapid than light even is thought, which it resembles! Pages would be needed to chronicle the lightning-like reflections which during the brief silence that ensued, flashed through Sylvie's mind, and illumined recesses of her own heart into which she had never before gazed.

Finding that she did not look up, Ursule proceeded, "Brave spirits, such as yours, should have courage to examine the consequences of their own actions. Do not think that I judge you harshly because I have blown away, with rude breath, the illusive mists floating before your eyes. The Marquis de St. Amar is the first gentleman with whom you have ever been acquainted. Independent of the superiority of his intellect and person over those of most men, it is but natural that you should feel attracted towards him—that you should be grateful for his attention—that you should enjoy his society—that—that—alas! Yes, it is but too natural that you should give him your heart!"

Sylvie's head sank deeper in the folds of Ursule's dress. There was another, longer pause.

"That you *do*, or *will* love him if you continue to be subjected to the spell of his presence, there is little room to doubt," added Ursule, unshrinkingly. She had applied the knife to the disease and must cut deep to reach its core. "Perhaps he does, or *may* love you, though that is far less certain; but what good could spring from his love or yours?"

Sylvie's head swayed from side to side with a despairing motion, which answered, "none! none! none!"

"Your stations in life are widely removed—there is such an almost impassable gulf between you, that he can never contemplate making you his wife."

At these words Sylvie grew as still as though pulse and breath had ceased.

"Then, to entertain a passion for you would simply be an *insult*, would it not?"

Still no movement.

"Sylvie, all I have to add is concentrated in one question. Before that parting which must come, grows harder for you, perhaps for *him*—for he is a man of genuine and honorable feeling, should you not save yourself, *and him*, future misery by putting an end to this ill-assorted intercourse?"

Sylvie no longer trembled, her frame was almost rigid in its calmness. Slowly she raised her ashy face, and looking with steady, unmoistened eyes into Ursule's, bowed assent. Her countenance appeared to have grown suddenly older; lines of sorrow and self-renunciation had been ploughed into the young brow in a few, brief minutes.

She took the tablets from her girdle and wrote:

"Best of friends, you are right! You have made me reflect. You have opened my eyes. I will go there no more!"

"I know what you suffer," returned Ursule, soothingly. "I have lived through anguish as poignant, in years long passed."

Sylvie rose, with a composure which was full of the true dignity of self-respect, embraced Ursule gratefully, lifted the velvet bonnet from the bed, and passed, with firm steps, from the room.

When she opened the door of her mother's apartment, she saw Madame de la Roche bending over her work, and heard her moaning to herself, as she plied her needle.

"So, you have come at last!" she murmured, fretfully. "I have been expecting you for an hour. You stay later and later every time you go. But nobody seems to care how lonely *I* am!"

"I will keep you company after to-day. I will help you work to-morrow," wrote Sylvie, and handed the tablets to her mother.

"What is the matter, then? What has happened? How oddly you look! There is not a drop of blood in your face! Have your grand friends become tired of you? Ah, I thought they would! That's the way with them all; and it's only what I foresaw."

Sylvie wrote in answer:

"They are as kind as ever; but my holiday as an invalid has been long enough. I am quite well now, and to-morrow I will go back to my sewing, until my voice comes back to me."

"And that will *never* be! Never! never! never!" was the consolatory response.

"Then I must sew on to the end," Sylvie quietly wrote in reply.

She left the tablets in her mother's hand, and went into her own little chamber.

The strong-hearted maiden did not waver in her resolution. The next day she sewed diligently by her mother's side, in spite of the constant complaining of the latter, who was no better satisfied than before.

When Maitre Beaujeu found his pupil thus employed, he accosted her with:

"What are you doing there, doubling up your chest in that fashion? What have you to do with needle and thread?"

She was prepared for this ebullition, and, with an air of assumed cheerfulness, wrote, "I have to earn my livelihood if I can do so, my master. I have been idle too long. Now it is time for my holiday to end."

"It is time for your folly to end," replied the irritated musician. "Who put this nonsense into your head?"

"Do not be angry with me," wrote Sylvie; "but, until my voice returns, I must use my needle; if it should never return, I shall have nothing but my needle to depend upon."

Maitre Beaujeu was ready to burst out into such a rage as Sylvie had not beheld since her misfortune, but her distressed and pleading look checked him, and he only answered, "We will talk to Mademoiselle Honorine about this to-morrow."

"I have written to tell Mademoiselle de St. Amar my determination," wrote Sylvie. "I thanked her for all her kindness, and bade her adieu; our paths, henceforth, lie apart."

"Where is the note?" inquired Beaujeu, authoritatively.

"It has gone—I sent it by post," wrote Sylvie.

"Miserable girl!" groaned her master, "you want to ruin yourself! You will make Mademoiselle Honorine think of you merely as a poor sewing girl, instead of the brilliant woman of genius whom she might be proud to take by the hand, and her brother, too——"

Sylvie quailed at these last words. Beaujeu saw how she shrank, and paused; a new light dawned upon him.

"What has occurred between you and the Marquis?" he asked, abruptly.

"Nothing," wrote Sylvie.

"You have had no misunderstanding? He has not offended you? He has not said or done anything to grieve you?"

She pointed to the "nothing" before traced on her tablets as still her answer.

"When did you come to your present novel resolution?"

"Yesterday," she wrote.

"And you mean to keep it?"

"My dear master, I do."

After Beaujeu had read these words, she closed the tablets and replaced them in her girdle, with an air which announced there was nothing more to be said.

Sylvie's inflexibility of purpose and determined composure baffled Beaujeu. He could not discover any solution of her enigmatical conduct.

While he was pondering, she went to the table, took up his violin, and placed it upon his knees. The action was a petition.

Beaujeu, somewhat softened, said, as he tuned his instrument, "When I have reflected, we will talk further about the unreasonable course you have chosen to pursue."

Reflection, however, supplied him with no argument that shook Sylvie's constancy. She steadfastly pursued the path she had marked out for herself without one sign of faltering. At times her countenance betrayed that she was passing through a great struggle, and gaining a great victory, but the combat that tested, increased, rather than exhausted, her mental strength.

Honorine wrote, entreating that she would give some fuller and more comprehensible explanation of her conduct, and begging that she would continue her visits. Sylvie replied that it was better their intercourse should end—*better, at least, for herself*, she added.

In vain Beaujeu fumed, and scolded, and argued; Sylvie was immoveable.

Strange to say, her melancholy mother gradually grew less despondent. She had said Sylvie's intimacy with those so far above her would come to a sudden termination—and it *had* done so; her spirits were always brightened by the verification of her evil predictions.

Sylvie's father had not recovered from the depression incident upon his last disappointment, and was seldom at home. He had returned to the notary, once more solicited employment, and gone to work with unwonted industry.

Sylvie's days now appeared to move in a fixed and monotonous circle, but their dull round was less oppressive than might have been imagined. In renouncing *self*, she had gained a serenity which is allied to cheerfulness. Consoling thoughts were infused into her mind, through many a heavenly influx, and spoke from lips that even casually addressed her, and found a voice in the very pages of the books she opened.

A few lines from one volume, in particular, haunted yet helped her. They were those words of Thomas à Kempis, "If thou seekest this or that, and would be here or there to enjoy *thine own will and pleasure*, thou shalt *never* be quiet or free from care, and in everything somewhat will be wanting, and in every place there will be some that will cross thee." Every day she became more and more convinced of the truth of those words of wisdom. She must set aside *self*—must renounce "her own will and pleasure" to find peace. She must wake from rosy dreams to soften stony realities with the mossy covering of patience. She must leave the flowery paths of self-gratification, and tread, with bleeding feet, the flinty ways of Duty, confident that by that road alone she could reach the goal of Happiness.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MUTE SINGER.

The dead calms of life are seldom of long duration, and the winds and waves of circumstance soon ruffled the smooth, blank sea of Sylvie's existence.

One morning, about a week after the events related in the foregoing chapter, she was sitting alone at her work. Her mother had gone out to breathe the fresh air and make a few needful purchases. All at once, the trampling of heavy feet upon the stair, and the confused murmur of excited voices, caused Sylvie to pause and listen. A hurried tapping sounded on the door. Sylvie opened it, and found good Dame Manot standing without.

"Oh, my poor child! my poor child!" she sobbed forth, in violent agitation.

The young girl, alarmed at this tearful greeting, tremblingly turned her eyes in the direction of the heavy tread, which now came nearer. She saw two men carrying a litter, followed by a miscellaneous crowd. A male form was partially visible upon the rude couch. She sprang towards it, and beheld—her father! lying senseless—it might be dead! The blood poured from a deep gash in his forehead, and stained with crimson his ghastly face, his fair hair, and disordered garments.

The daughter's rapid glance of horror was followed by a shriek, that rang through the long corridor—rang? yes, *rang* in one loud, clear note of music!

"My father! oh, my father! bring him in!" uttered in the same key, burst upon the startled ears of all present. She had spoken—*spoken in song!* She had involuntarily, unconsciously, *sung* the words that rushed to her lips.*

Every one stood petrified.

"Oh, bring him in!" she sang again.

The bearers had set down their piteous load. Wonder-struck, they lifted it and obeyed.

When Monsieur de la Roche was laid upon his own bed, his daughter dropped upon her knees at his side, and with steady hand, pressing together the gaping, gushing wound, turned to Dame Manot, singing: "Dr. Souvestre—go! bring him quickly!"

The concierge was stunned, confounded.

"It is wonderful! wonderful!" she ejaculated, without attempting to stir.

The strangers, who had poured into the room, thought this young girl, who sang while a parent lay dying or dead before her, must surely be deprived of reason.

Sylvie was too deeply absorbed in the contemplation of her father, to comprehend the cause of their stupefying amazement. Finding that the *concierge* did not move, she turned to her again, and sang imploringly: "Go! go! go!"

That instant Mathieu, who chanced to be passing the door, made his way through the crowd.

Sylvie caught sight of him, and sang, in a voice of thrilling pathos. "Good Mathieu, go for Dr. Souvestre! Oh! bring him quickly!"

"She has regained her voice! Thank God! thank God!" cried the boy.

Without heeding his words, she motioned to him impatiently, still singing, "Go! go! do you not see he bleeds to death?"

Mathieu darted away, shouting, as he flew down the stairs, "She has regained her voice! Mademoiselle Sylvie has regained her voice!"

He ran against, and nearly overturned, some one who was ascending. It was Maitre Beaujeu, who seized him savagely by the shoulders.

"Do you want to knock me down, you crazy cripple? Why are you yelling in that frantic fashion?"

"She has regained her voice! regained her voice!" shrieked Mathieu, breaking away from him and hurrying on.

The boy gave a sharp rap on Ursule's door, and, without waiting for her to appear, flung it open, and screamed out, "She has regained her voice! her voice!" then rushed down the next flight.

At the entrance of the house he encountered Madame de la Roche, creeping dolefully along, with a basket upon her arm.

"She has regained her voice! regained her voice!" bellowed Mathieu, joyfully, in her ears; and then, with a leap that almost ended in a somerset, he bounded into the street, and fled.

Madame de la Roche could hardly credit her ears.

"Regained her voice! That was surely what he said! Whose voice could it be but Sylvie's?"

Excitement imparted strength to limbs that had failed her a moment before, and she rapidly mounted the stairs and entered her own room, only a few moments after Beaujeu and Ursule.

What a sight met her eyes! Her husband stretched upon the bed, white as a corpse, and covered with blood;—Sylvie, her hands and arms all crimsoned, kneeling beside him, trying to stem that red current by holding together the deeply parted flesh from which it spouted, if her fingers, for an instant, relaxed their pressure.

Madame de la Roche staggered towards the couch.

The moment Sylvie beheld her she sang—

"Mother! he lives! He has but fainted! If we can only staunch this blood, all will be well!"

"Sylvie! Sylvie!" was all her mother could gasp forth.

"Are you his wife?" asked one of the men who had carried the litter.

"Yes, yes; how did this happen?"

"He was thrown from a horse. I was passing when the spirited creature flung him over her head. I recognized the animal—a splendid grey mare which a friend of mine has for sale. It was through my friend, the owner, that we discovered who this gentleman was, and were enabled to carry him home. It's a sad accident, for that's an ugly cut; and I fear your troubles don't end here; I am afraid the shock of seeing her father in this terrible condition has unsettled your daughter's mind," added the man, looking pityingly at Sylvie.

Before Madame de la Roche could reply, Mathieu re-entered with Dr. Souvestre, whom he had fortunately encountered a few paces from the door.

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* This singular incident, which taxes the credulity of the reader, is not an imaginary occurrence. A similar circumstance was related to the writer by one whose veracity could not be doubted, and who was narrating her own experience.

When Sylvie saw the physician, she sang:

"Can you not staunch this blood? oh, lose no time or he will die!"

"It is true, then! she has regained her voice! *Most marvellous!*" ejaculated the doctor, gazing at her in astonishment, without regarding her father.

"For Heaven's sake, lose no time or he will die!" sang Sylvie.

Her beseeching intonation recalled the doctor to himself, and he proceeded to examine, cleanse, and sew up the wound.

During the process, he asked Sylvie several necessary questions, to which she replied, as before, in song.

Maitre Beaujeu had sunk into a chair, completely overpowered by rapturous emotion. His hands were tightly clasped, his eyes upraised, with an expression of beatitude, and tears ran in rapid showers down his withered cheeks.

Ursule laughed and cried by turns, yet had sufficient presence of mind to assist Sylvie, who was diligently aiding the doctor, now lifting up the matted locks which he unsparingly severed from her father's temples, now holding the water and sponge, now sewing bandages and handing pins.

Mathieu capered about the room, crying in the ears of every one who came in his way:

"She has regained her voice! she has regained her voice! Do you not hear? do you not hear?"

The blood was staunched—the wound sewed—the head bound up Monsieur de la Roche opened his eyes, but seeing his daughter bending over him, feebly murmured:

"Sylvie!"

"My father!" she sang, in reply.

"Good Heavens! Is that you, Sylvie? or am I dreaming? What is this? Who are these people?" he asked, with a confused look. "My daughter, is it really you?"

"Yes, father, it is I!" again she answered, singing.

"And your voice is restored? Gracious Heaven! Is it possible?"

Sylvie, with a convulsive start that told she had not until that moment been aware of the joyful fact, replied with a trill of such power, sweetness and flexibility that Beaujeu leapt from his seat, vehemently clapping his hands, and shouting, "bravo! bravo! bravo!" in uncontrollable ecstacy.

Monsieur de la Roche had lifted himself upon his elbow, and cried out with his old enthusiasm, "Why, what a set of miserable croakers you have all been! Even *you*, doctor! You see—she can speak! she can sing! She has regained that glorious voice which you all told me was gone forever! Now all will be right again! What a pity that grey mare was too spirited for my purpose! There was no managing the mettlesome creature. She was a beauty and a bargain! Thinking I might, by and by, contrive to purchase her, I gave her a trial, and she threw me. But it won't matter; I'm not much worse for the trouble, and she has her equals in the market." As he was running on thus hopefully, his eyes rested upon the musician. "Ah, Beaujeu, my dear fellow, are you there? Let Monsieur Le Grand know at once that Sylvie will sing for him *to-morrow—to-night*—when he wishes! Will you not, child?"

Sylvie, now quite composed, tried to syllable "yes," but alas! the sound died away in a hoarse whisper!

With a look of blank consternation, she added, almost inaudibly, "My voice! my voice has gone again!"

Then, how they all gathered around her, with the sudden, sickening revulsion of feeling that follows hope changed to despair!

"Can you not speak? Try—try again!" said Beaujeu, tenderly taking the hand, still red with the gory stain.

She shook her head mournfully.

Grief and disappointment sealed every lip.

At last the silence was broken by Doctor Souvestre, who exclaimed, as though a thought had just struck him; "you did not *speak* before—you were *singing* not *speaking* when I entered. Try to sing again!"

Sylvie broke forth with that beautiful anthem from Handel's "Messiah"—"But thou didst not leave his soul," and while her entranced auditors listened in dumb wonder, she sang the whole air with the most faultless vocalization.

"This is very extraordinary! The first case of the kind that ever came under my notice!" said the young practitioner, who always talked as though he had the experience of half a century or more. "It is obvious that only the vocal chords used in *speaking* are injured, those called into action when she *sings* are unimpaired."

"Her great gift remains! She will be able to resume her profession?" exclaimed Beaujeu, in a tone of mingled affirmation and interrogation.

"Yes, assuredly," replied the physician.

Who could attempt to describe the holy rapture that rendered Sylvie's face luminous?

The burst of joy that greeted the doctor's words was suddenly checked. Monsieur de la Roche, exhausted by loss of blood and emotion, sank back, insensible.

The doctor peremptorily ordered the apartment to be cleared of all but Sylvie, her mother, and Ursule.

Beaujeu and Mathieu seemed inclined to linger, not from any deep interest in the patient, but because they could not forego the delight of again hearing Sylvie's long-silent voice. An impatient gesture from Dr. Souvestre caused the musician to seize hold of the hunchback, with a rough friendliness that showed their bond of union was drawn closer by this mutual joy, and hurry with him out of the apartment.

Monsieur de la Roche was restored to consciousness with difficulty, and when his heavy eyes once more unclosed, and the breath came slowly through his white and parted lips, it was apparent that his mind wandered, and his pulse gave indication of fever.

Madame de la Roche was almost excusable for her piteous lamentation.

"Alas! alas! the shadow of a joy never comes to us, except hand in hand with a tangible sorrow!"

Dr. Souvestre administered an opiate, and gave strict orders that the patient should remain undisturbed. He soon sank into a heavy slumber.

Sylvie, in passing the old piano, so long closed, threw it open by an irresistible impulse, but without allowing her fingers to wander over the yellow keys, she softly closed the lid again, and stole to her own chamber to give her full heart vent in that holy communing that heightened her every joy and lessened her every sorrow.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

◆

A BACHELOR'S REFLECTIONS.—I wish that I had been married thirty years ago. Oh! I wish a wife and a half a score of children would now start up around me, and bring along with them all that affection which we should have had for each other by being early acquainted. But as it is, in my present state, there is not a person in the world I care a straw for; and the world is pretty even with me, for I don't believe there is a creature in it who cares a straw for me.

TO THE FALSE-HEARTED.

BY HERMIONE.

Thou sayest well; I know I "have no claim"
  Which human law would for one moment own;
My hope was in the honor of your heart,
  Its delicate and generous faith alone:
But if these are not; if your heart be *small*,
  Too *blind* to see the kindness that you owe,
Too *shallow* and too *dull* to understand
  What God's high laws command you to bestow;
Not pure enough to well requite the love
  You first evoked, then vainly sought to kill;
Too near the earth, too sensual to know
  The upright way each promise to fulfill;
If this *is* the true measure of your soul,
  Not there does what I loved and trusted dwell;
I thought your nature fine, your feelings pure—
  If *not* God help you, Richard! *fare you well!*

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THE YEOMAN.

BY EDMUND BERKETT.

On the afternoon of a bright spring day in the latter portion of the twelfth century, a young yeoman was busily engaged, with bow and round-headed arrows, in a noble English forest standing somewhat east of the river Avon. He was shooting at a mark, made by notching a large tree; and with no very remarkable success, for his arrows shattered the bark for a considerable space around the notch, without striking the notch itself. Time after time he adjusted his arrow, pulled the string to his ear, aimed long and carefully, and then let fly at the mark, eagerly following with his eye the course of the swift messenger, only to see it knock the bark from the tree.

At length, after firing his quiver of arrows over and over again, he seemed bent upon making a last despairing trial. Fixing the notch of his arrow with unusual care to the string, he bent the bow very slowly, and then relaxed it. After fixing his eye intently on the mark, he again bent it, drawing the string this time nearly to his ear—and again allowed it to return. With another fixed gaze at the mark, he drew the string until the bow threatened to pass the arrow head, and then, after an anxious aim, he let drive the arrow with tremendous force. It actually missed the tree itself! At this he burst into a terrible passion, and if the poor arrows, which lay about on the ground, had been living enemies, they could not have been more fearfully execrated.

"May the infernal powers take you!" he exclaimed. "May the lightning blast you where you lie! Ye are leagued against me! Do you think to inveigle me into striving for her hand with such base tools as ye have proved yourselves to-day?"

With these words, he quickly snatched the last arrow which remained in his quiver, and with scarcely an aim, he let it fly, exclaiming, "Go, keep company with the rest of the miserable herd!" and furiously dashed his bow to the ground, without deigning a look at the course the arrow might take.

"A most yeoman-like shot, my young friend," uttered a voice near him.

He turned, ashamed to be seen in such a foolish passion, and beheld a stranger issuing from the woods at his left.

"A most yeoman-like shot!" repeated the stranger. "Few can drive an arrow inside of that!"

"Who are you, sirrah, who thus obtrudes himself only to insult me?" exclaimed the young yeoman, having recovered from his surprise at the stranger's sudden appearance, but not yet wholly recovered from his temper.

"I am your friend, Richard. Let this suffice," was the answer. "Pray inform me how I have insulted you?"

"How!" returned the young archer, whose anger was considertbly softened by the manner of the stranger, together with the peculiar way in which he called him by name. "How! By affecting to praise my shots, which you know to be execrable!"

"Your former shots were bad enough, I'll acknowledge, Richard; but I again affirm that your last was a brave one. Come—let the mark itself testify to the truth of what I say."

With these words the stranger led Richard to the tree—and sure enough! an indentation, made by the round head of the arrow, appeared well toward the very centre of the notch. Richard looked first at the mark, and then at the stranger in complete bewilderment. His companion smiled and said:

"You must learn to send off all your arrows as you sent that."

"I let that fly in a fit of passion," returned Richard. "I can't make myself thus angry when my skill is most needed."

"I will teach you to do it without the aid of passion. But why so gloomy? You may win Constance yet."

The young yeoman blushed, but said nothing.

"You need not be ashamed, my young friend," continued the stranger. "She is a noble prize to win, if I judge aright from what I have heard."

"You do judge aright!" His own eagerness, together with the smile which passed over his companion's countenance, caused Richard to blush more deeply, and to turn away his head in confusion.

"I doubt it not," was the answer. "And moreover, my young friend, I doubt not that she would as warmly testify in your favor, if I should affirm that you were, in all respects, worthy of her. But time flies, and I must give you a lesson in archery before the sun disappears. We will gather the arrows, which were so recently the victims of your maledictions."

"I feel like asking their pardon," said Richard with a voice of considerable humility. "I confess I was terribly provoked. When I cried out to them so, I felt as though each one was maliciously determined to rob me of——"

"Constance," added the stranger with a smile. "Well, well, I think I understand your feelings. But how did her father come to make such a proclamation as the one which has reached my ears?" he inquired, as he went about picking up the scattered arrows.

"That sneaking cur, Hugh, because, forsooth, he is accounted the leading archer of this part of the country, thought fit to sue for Constance's hand. And seeing she wouldn't have him—the ill-looking dog!—he has been filling the head of her stupid, stubborn, tyrannical father, who, perhaps you have heard, was accounted the best archer round about, when he was younger—filling the head of her father, who is half blind, struck with the palsy, and sometimes I believe half-witted, by the way he carries on matters—filling his head with the abominable notion that his daughter must be given to the best archer who is willing to try for her—because, forsooth, she is the daughter of a man who has been the best archer here in past times. So out comes his proclamation, as though he was the king, declaring, that whoever proves himself the best archer on the village green, on the next holiday, shall have his daughter in marriage!"

Richard was evidently returning to his former state of passionate anger, if indeed it was not already upon him.

"Then you have a fortnight to practice in," said the stranger in a quiet voice, who had been listening patiently to the excited account of his companion.

"Well, what can a fortnight do for me against that scheming Hugh? He's the best shot in these parts, and he knew it when he worked on the old man. He's ten years older than I am, and he's handled his bow since he was old enough to stand on his feet, while circumstances have prevented me from necessary practice."

"You can do a great deal in that time if you keep busy. Come, let us see what you can do in the half hour before twilight."

With these words the stranger led the way to the spot, from which Richard was shooting his shafts when we were first introduced to him. Picking up the bow, he quietly adjusted an arrow, and almost before Richard was aware of his intentions, he had sent it full into the centre of the mark.

"Now, having presented my testimonials," said he, smiling at the look of wonder fixed on Richard's countenance, "allow me to be your teacher for awhile."

To this proposition the young yeoman most willingly assented.

"You have a few bad faults, which I noticed as I watched you from yonder," said the stranger. "You draw the arrow awkwardly out of the line when you pull the string—the arrow is not guided correctly by either hand—your eye is fixed too much on the end of the arrow—and you aim too long, and allow the arrow to hang on the string when you discharge it. Now you are not very faulty with any one of them separately, yet, take them all together, they make bad work with your shooting. When you were in your passion, and grasped your last arrow, you forgot to be anxious about all these things, and your natural grace and boldness obtained the mastery. In your rage you did not look at your shaft longer than two seconds, but I saw you looking straight at the mark, as though you were including it among the objects of your wrath. You have seen the result."

Having thus delivered himself, he proceeded to show Richard the direct manner of holding the arrow, drawing the string, and letting the notch of the arrow spring neatly and smartly from it, and in an half hour the latter had made remarkable progress. At the end of that time, the mark could not be seen with sufficient distinctness, on account of the twilight; so they prepared to depart.

"And pray," said Richard, "to whom shall I return my thanks for this kindness?"

"To one, for whom your father performed a service, when he was alive, which he never can forget. He had not sufficient opportunity to express all his gratitude to the father, so he has come to repay the favor through the son. This is all I can tell you at present. Meet me here to-morrow three hours before sunset, and we will practice again."

With these word the stranger passed into the forest, and Richard returned home, filled with wonder at the incidents of the afternoon, and with a buoyant hope that he should yet outmatch Hugh the archer, on his own grounds.

The reader has gathered, from the conversation carried on between Richard and the stranger, hints sufficient to suggest what I need not write out in form. The principal facts stated by the young yeoman were correct. He, however, in his excitement, somewhat exaggerated the weaknesses of the father of Constance. Yet the main idea conveyed by him was true, and the weaknesses he really possessed were such as could be easily worked upon by so crafty a man as was Hugh the archer.

His daughter had begged him, with all the tearful eloquence which a daughter, under such circumstances, could command, not to sacrifice her to a whim, which originated in the mind of a hard-hearted and unprincipled man. The old man's weak points, which in one sense were his strongest points, were utterly under the command of Hugh, who knew but too well how to make the best of the advantage he had attained. Under his influence, the father saw in the moans and prayers of his daughter, nothing but the expressions of an obdurate and undutiful child, setting herself against his authority. And, moreover, he was well aware that she looked with strong favor on Richard, whom, through the insidious influence of Hugh, he viewed with strong dislike, if not with positive hate. Consequently, every exhibition of sorrow on the part of Constance was looked upon as an expression of love for Richard, and rather steeled the old man's heart than softened it.

On the following afternoon the young yeoman and the stranger met according to agreement, and practiced until sun-down. Richard was delighted with his progress; and when we consider the prize at stake, we may be sure that he attended most assiduously to all the hints and suggestions given by his strange friend. Before they parted the second time, the stranger had promised to meet him each day, until the holiday when the trial was to take place.

Each succeeding evening found Richard wonderfully improved in his archery; and when the sun went down for the last time before the long expected day should arrive, Richard felt that the prize would be his ere another twenty-four hours had passed. As they were parting on this last evening, the stranger bid him keep his nerves steady on the morrow, and shoot home with a bold heart and prompt hand.

The long expected day came at last. We may be sure that the novel trial for the hand (the heart no triumphant bow could win) of Constance, who was known far and wide for her goodness, had brought a great collection of people together in the village where the trial was to take place. Some thought it was a shame to sacrifice a noble girl to such folly, while others thought there was something very romantic about it, and pronounced it but proper for the man who married the daughter of him who had been the best archer of the county, to be able to take the father's place. And so they conversed, the conversation sometimes characterized by considerable excitement, especially when a particular friend of Constance would happen to enter into a debate with one of those who advocated the last mentioned opinion.

At length, with considerable pomp and circumstance, the father, accompanied by his daughter, entered the green, accompanied by a selected train. They were both supported; one trembling from the effects of a recent stroke of palsy, and the other from the effects of an almost broken heart. The former was conducted to a sort of throne, from which he was to preside over the trial, and the latter to an elevated seat by his side. The attendants stationed themselves according to arrangements dictated by the fancy of the old man.

Then the preparations for the trial began. The mark was set up at the proper distance, and the order in which the competitors should follow each other was arranged. By common consent, Hugh and Richard were to shoot last, Hugh managing to precede Richard, calculating, with subtle sagacity, that his own excellent shots—for he rarely made indifferent ones—would so excite his rival in his anxiety to excel them, that what little skill he believed he possessed would be exerted at no inconsiderable disadvantage, for nervousness in nice archery is as bad as it is in shooting with the rifle.

Several had entered the lists; and as one succeeded another in the trial, each firing three arrows, the spectators manifested the most intense interest. Many fine shots were made; and as often as one was unusually fortunate, a general shout expressed the pleasure of the people. The arrows were pointed, for the old man said he wanted "every shaft to be its own mark;" and they were removed as fast as they too much obstructed the target, their places being properly designated.

At length came Hugh's turn. With confidence and promptness he delivered his shots, his arrows striking well toward the centre of the target. A loud shout went up from a great portion of the people; the old man rubbed his trembling hands, exclaiming: "This is the son for me!" while Constance turned as pale as death. Her own and Richard's friends gazed on the arrows with scowls and compressed lips, and in spite of all his efforts to remain calm, Richard trembled, and the blood rushed painfully to his face. He succeeded in somewhat composing himself, however, and stepped, with as much confidence as possible, to the spot from whence he was to shoot. Carefully adjusting his first arrow, he pulled the string, but again relaxed it, for he found he was not in a proper state to fire. But as the people, as well as the old man, manifested impatience, he drew again, and let fly the shaft. As he had feared, it struck outside of Hugh's three arrows by a considerable distance. Adjusting his second arrow, he determined to wait awhile to collect himself.

"A brave fellow for rabbits!" shouted a coarse voice from the crowd. "How many leagues would one run before he would get ready to shoot it?"

Stung by the taunt, Richard sent this arrow more wildly than the other. Many of the people laughed; his friends expressed their dissatisfaction by still deeper scowls; Hugh rubbed his bony hands, and grimly smiled; while Constance, poor girl, appeared as if but little blood or strength remained to sustain her longer.

"Take courage, and remember my instructions!" uttered a calm, soothing voice behind him.

Turning hastily around, he beheld the stranger, dressed in green, and equipped with bow and arrows. A slight sign warned him to manifest no surprise. Instantly the calmness of his friend of the forest seemed to take command of his own nerves. Waiting a few moments, in spite of the taunts of several of Hugh's admirers, subtly encouraged by Hugh himself, he fixed his third shaft to the string and pulled with a steady hand. With a quick, prompt start, the arrow left the cord, and flew inside of Hugh's best, nearly piercing the centre.

A shout now went up from the friends of Richard and Constance, and from the great mass of the people, which echoed and re-echoed among the hills and woods; Constance leaped to her feet with the sudden revulsion of feeling from sorrow to joy, and fell fainting into the arms of an attendant.

"He's won the prize! He's won the prize!" arose from the spectators; and then again they thundered their applause to the hills and woods.

Hugh turned pale with rage.

"It's false! By all that's holy, it's false!" he shouted, with a hoarse yet powerful voice. "Ralph!" he cried, stalking up to the old man, "dost thou intend to throw away thy daughter on a slip of that base churl's bow?"

"It's a fair shot!" cried a voice from the crowd.

"He who strikes nearest the centre gains the prize!" shouted another, as the old man seemed to receive Hugh's words with favor.

"So said the proclamation!"

"This you proclaimed, old man?"

"The best shot wins! So thou hast promised!" issued from the crowd, almost simultaneously.

Hugh saw his mistake in giving way to his passion. He changed his tactics.

"But," said he, in a wild tone, "Ralph wants the best archer for his son. Does a chance shot prove a man the best archer?"

These words, and the manner of their delivery, began to affect a number of the spectators, and the old man seemed wavering.

"Allow me to enter the lists, and by the time I am finished your minds may be more clear," said the stranger, in a calm voice.

"Would you make the trial?" asked the old man, eagerly, glad for a little respite.

"I would," was the answer.

"Let him try, then!" shouted some of those who had been affected by Hugh's wily words.

"I am willing, if my friend Richard is," said Hugh, glad to regain the good will of the people by appearing generous. The tumultuous demonstrations of feeling in favor of Richard, which grew stronger with the great mass, who still remained unaffected by his last words, caused him to fear the results of further pressing his protestations at that time. Moreover, he hated Richard, and any other winner of the prize was better than he.

Richard also acquiesced, for he knew that he had nothing to fear, being assured both by the stranger's manner and by certain words he had dropped in his ear.

"Thou may'st enter," uttered old Ralph, with faltering dignity.

The stranger advanced, and with scarcely an aim, rapidly discharged three arrows into the target.

"Those are for the brave yeoman yonder," he said, nodding toward Richard, and then disappeared in the crowd.

All were surprised at his conduct, but when the target come to be closely examined, surprise changed into wonder. The arrows, which had been delivered with such rapidity, stood in a rude semi-circle around Richard's lucky shaft, each one being about a quarter of an inch distant from it, and yet leaving it still nearest the centre.

These remarkable shots, together with the sudden memory of the green dress, caused the truth to burst on the minds of those nearest the target.

"ROBIN HOOD!"

This cry spread from the target to all parts of the crowd, as the sound of the approaching tempest spreads through the forest. Each man looked quickly about him—but he saw not the object of his search. The stranger had disappeared.

It is hardly necessary to add, that Hugh was obliged to succumb to the overwhelming spirit of the multitude. Richard was declared victor, by universal acclamation, in which declaration the old man was compelled to join. Robin Hood was a great favorite of his, as he was with the people generally, and the recent incident served to stir up his generous blood, of which he was in reality not without a goodly share. He felt obliged to acknowledge that Richard had fairly won his daughter, according to his proclamation. Richard offered to try again with Hugh, but the people would not have it so; and old Ralph confessed their determination was just. And so he allowed them to lead the young yeoman to Constance, (who had now recovered, though sitting, as if in bewilderment she was striving to comprehend the happy conclusion of the to her long-dreaded trial) join their hands, and conduct them to his home, with as much pomp and circumstance as when the train entered the green, and with far more joy; while Hugh wandered away in an opposite direction, a lonely, disappointed, and unhappy man.

Ere long the happy couple were joined in those firm and holy bonds, which so felicitously close the trials and sorrows of anxious lovers; and the old man learned to love his new son as well as if he were of his own blood.

The young yeoman became established as the first archer between Sherwood and the Avon; and he ever remained a steadfast friend to the stranger of the forest.

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MOSES ORAN;
OR,
"THE BURGLARS' NEST."

BY GEO. CLARENCE BLANCHARD.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SUNSHINE ONCE MORE.

"What a dreadful thing burglars are to be sure," observed Mrs. Platt a few evenings after the occurrence of the incidents alluded to in our last chapters.

Mrs. Platt was occupying a rocking chair in her sitting room, quietly knitting, while Fanny was listlessly gazing out of the window, absorbed in her own private reflections; her rosy cheeks have grown a shade paler since we last saw her, and her liquid eyes have even a softer and more pensive cast.

The exciting scenes of the burglary, and Mr. Tarleton's death, might have exerted some influence on her delicate, sensitive organization; but it was not that that had dimmed the roses; it was something else, fair reader, which you can easily guess. Fanny was thinking of Osborne; he was still in prison, and her anxious solicitude for him had conjured up a host of vague apprehensions, till she had succeeded in making herself decidedly unhappy—and why should she be so interested in that youth?

She had heard at last that it was he who had rescued her from Tarleton; it was the same one who had, by a timely warning, preserved them from the burglary. It was the same gentle youth who had thwarted the machinations of unprincipled men; and to defend her honor he had risked his own reputation and life.

Gratitude is a dangerous feeling in woman's heart. No sooner is her gentle, susceptible nature influenced by it, than love is sure to follow.

If the truth must be told, our heroine was already desperately in love with Osborne, and—charming simplicity, unconscious of it all—was artless enough, as many others have been likewise, to mistake it for gratitude; but we are digressing, so let us proceed with our narrative.

"What a dreadful thing burglars are to be sure," repeated Mrs. Platt, loooking up at her niece's pensive face in some surprise. "Dear me, child, what can be the matter with you now? you look so bad that if I didn't know better, I should say you was mourning for Mr. Tarleton, and when I come to think of it, it is very proper for you to be serious, my dear, as you was engaged to him—I must say I feel serious myself when I think of those dreadful burglars, and the frightful oaths and noises they made, and then it reminds me so of Jerry, and how badly he turned out."

"Aunt Susan," interrupted Fanny, coloring in spite of herself, "I wish you wouldn't call him by that horrid name—I am really out of patience with you."

"Well, my dear, I must say I quite forgot what you told me yesterday, that he aint a burglar after all, and that his name isn't Jerry; I am sure I don't bear him malice for deceiving me, or not letting me know his real name either; and I daresay he's very penitent for being a burglar, and as long as he reforms he'll come out right. I don't see my dear," continued the voluble old lady, "if Jerry is innocent, as you say he is, why they keep him in jail?"

"His innocence can be proved, aunt," returned Fanny, with a slight air of vexation.

"Well, well," continued the incorrigible old lady, "I won't say anything further about that; because, now, I remember, you told me that he was a burglar by accident, or something of that sort. I have been thinking whether Jerry can really be believed or not. He might have deceived you, though I daresay he told the truth. He certainly has a remarkable memory for history and——"

Here Mrs. Platt was interrupted just as she was preparing to plunge into her favorite theme, by the door opening.

Mr. Van Cleeker put in his head.

"Fanny, my dear child, I wish to speak with you a few moments."

Fanny followed her father to the library; she saw from his anxious face that some fresh trouble had happened.

Mr. Van Cleeker, after closing the door, took from his pocket a note.

"This," observed he, handing it to his daughter, "is from Morris Choler, the administrator of the Tarleton property. The contents, as you will see, are cold, precise, and business-like."

Fanny read it, and disdainfully curled her lip.

"He is another Tarleton," said she.

"Never mind," rejoined the old gentleman, with a sigh, "it is just what I expected. Insolence is too often a prerogative of power. He sends for me as if I were some servant. But I shall go and see him nevertheless."

"I would, dear father," continued she, "perhaps he may relent if he hears your case."

"Spoken like a woman," rejoined Mr. Van Cleeker, playfully stroking her under the chin; "little simpleton, do not suppose that any one intends to show such extraordinary mercy to your unfortunate papa."

"Is this Mr. Morris Choler any relative to the bad man?"

"None that I am aware of," returned Mr. Van Cleeker. "He is an English lawyer, and has been advertising for some time for the heirs of the Oran estate, the property of which is immense. I know the family is amongst the highest and most respectable in Great Britain. You have heard me speak of Wilton Oran?"

Fanny nodded her head affirmatively.

"We first met," pursued Mr. Van Cleeker, "at Cambridge, where I finished my collegiate course, and the warmest friendship sprung up between us. He was in some financial trouble then, and I assisted him. I have often, in the midst of my troubles, dear Fanny, thought of writing to Wilton, but pride deterred me. Besides, I heard he was elevated to the peerage, and I suppose he has long since forgotten his college chum. He had the warmest, most benevolent heart that ever beat in mortal man."

"This lawyer must know about him, surely," suggested Miss Van Cleeker.

"Yes," returned her father, musingly; "I intend to inquire. By the by, the Oran family is involved in a good deal of mystery. I remember hearing Wilton say his elder brother was very dissipated, and caused his parents great uneasiness. A short time afterwards he married an American lady, against the express wishes of Sir William, and was disinherited. The old man on his death-bed having heard of the death of his son, made a new will, and bequeathed the whole of his immense estate to the children of Moses Oran. It is one of the strangest circumstances that no legitimate heir can be found. I cannot conceive why so much pains should be taken, when 'tis recollected how avaricious relatives are to clutch money.

I am sure Wilton has a hand in this, but I must now start off to the lawyer; so, Fanny dear, run and get my surtout and hat."

Fanny cheerfully complied with his request, and having exhorted his daughter to keep up her spirits, he departed forthwith to the residence of the late Job Tarleton.

As soon as he reached there, he was ushered into the library.

It was near dusk, and the apartment partially darkened. A tall form rose on his entrance.

Mr. Van Cleeker was just in the act of making a profound bow, when the stranger advanced towards him with extended hand.

"Have you forgotten your old friend?"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the startled old gentleman, "that voice I should know anywhere. *Wilton Oran*——"

"The same," returned the nobleman, embracing him with frank cordiality. "You have not forgotten me, then?"

"I never dreamt that I should meet you here," returned Mr. Van Cleeker, still retaining his old friend's hand. "I came to meet the lawyer, Morris Choler."

"You see him before you now," rejoined Lord Lenox, smiling. "I am he. You must overlook my peremptory note; it was so written to take you by pleasant surprise."

"My dear friend," exclaimed Mr. Van Cleeker, joyfully, "so you are the one who has me in his power. Thank God, it is no one else."

"Do not speak of it," returned Lord Lenox, with delicacy. "I have known about it long, and had, some time since, determined upon not only releasing you from this troublesome bond, but saving your daughter from an unhallowed marriage."

The nobleman then proceeded to state how, having found some of Tarleton's private papers, and accidentally overheard a portion of his conversation, he had thus been led to a clue to his motives. The rest of the circumstances have been already detailed to the reader.

After he had concluded, Mr. Van Cleeker warmly pressed his hand.

"And for all this, my friend, how can I ever repay you?"

"By never mentioning it again," returned Lord Lenox, smiling; and then he added, in a more serious tone, "I am at present weighed down with a responsible case. For a year past I have been searching for the child of my unfortunate brother. While Moses was alive, well knowing his lawless character, I forbore to seek out the boy, fearing, in his malicious disappointment, he might attempt his life."

"Your brother is really dead, then?"

"I think so," returned Lord Lenox, thoughtfully, "at least I suppose so, from the information I received. I am positive of one thing, viz., that my misguided brother was legally married and had a son, though what became of the boy I have never been able to discover."

"How do you know that he is not dead, also?"

"Some time ago," rejoined Lord Lenox, "an anonymous note was sent me, assuring me the boy was living. Although I made unavailing attempts to find the person who gave the information, I could not succeed in ascertaining anything further. Yesterday I was much surprised and gratified to receive a note from a Mr. Duffy, who states that he can give me important information. Any how, I think I am in the right track at last."

"Suppose your young heir should turn out a bad character."

"Well, then, we must reform him," returned the nobleman, smiling. "I pledged myself to find him, and while a shadow of hope remains, I shall spare no pains to that end. But come," added he, taking his friend's arm within his own, "dinner is waiting, and I sent for you on purpose to have you help me to eat it. Whether you are an advocate for late dinners or not, I shall positively take no refusal."

So saying, his noble friend led him into the dining-room, where a neat little table was set, and a very simple, plain repast spread.

"You see I am not an epicure," observed Lord Lenox. "I live cleanly, as noblemen should, which you know is the Shaksperian creed."

Motioning his friend to be seated, Lord Lenox in an easy, unconstrained manner, did the honors of the board, and chatted and laughed over old times with Mr. Van Cleeker.

How pleasant is the reunion of old friends! Youth is renewed, and our hearts grow young again in recurring to the scenes of the past, bringing up memories that have been slumbering undisturbed for years.

Lord Lenox had so many anecdotes to tell, so many reminiscences to recall, that the time insensibly slipped by. When Mr. Van Cleeker arose to take his leave, his kind friend whispered in his ear—

"Tell your little daughter that her black eyes have prevailed over Mr. Tarleton's successor, and she is once more heiress of the Van Cleeker house."

CHAPTER XXIX.

IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS.

After Mr. Van Cleeker had taken his leave, Lord Lenox paced the room, anxiously awaiting the appearance of Mr. Detective Duffy. To beguile the time, he took out a package of letters, and amused himself with looking over them. There was one dated 1818, written in a delicate female hand, which he paused and perused with a species of interest awakened by some kindred association. Let us look over him as he reads. The note ran thus:

"I do not know how it is, but every day and every hour, with its passing events, only serve to remind me of your absence, and increase the loneliness of my situation. I chide you not for your long delay, for I am persuaded you would not be separated from your Leonora a moment but for cruel necessity; but why, dear Moses, do you neglect me? Each packet that arrives I eagerly watch for some loving token of your remembrance, a stray line, even, would be welcomed with joy. Alas, I fear you are forgetting your anxious wife.

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"Heaven has blessed you with a treasure of life. I call him Osborne. Your loving wife and child await your coming. LEONORA."

"Strange, strange," muttered Lord Lenox, returning the letter back to his pocket. "If that boy Osborne can be found, the Oran estate will be safe. The time is nearly expired, and I shall have to return without accomplishing my purpose. I wish this Mr. Duffy would come, if his information is really so important."

The impatient nobleman was soon gratified by the arrival of his expected visitor.

Mr. Detective Duffy had not quite lost his anxious, care-worn expression, but the deeper feelings of resentment seemed erased, his eye no longer sparkled with that spirit of revenge noticeable a month ago.

Lord Lenox rose on the entrance of his visitor, and welcomed him with his usual urbane politeness.

"Mr. Choler, I believe?"

"The same," rejoined Lord Lenox, motioning him to be seated. "Your note, which I received yesterday, gives me to understand that you are in possession of important facts touching the whereabouts of the heir of the Oran estate. I have positive proof that a legitimate claimant to this property is now living, and I am naturally anxious to ascertain where he can be found."

"Anything that I can state," replied Mr. Duffy, "that will tend to throw additional light on the subject, will be most cheerfully given. From the substance of your advertisement, I presume you belive Moses Oran is dead?"

"Undoubtedly," returned the nobleman, with interest; "do you know anything to the contrary?"

"I do. *He is yet living!*"

"*Indeed!*" exclaimed Lord Lenox, flushing slightly. "How do you know this—how can you prove its truth?"

"In the easiest way. You have heard of the notorious Tomtit's gang?"

"What, the one who attempted the burglary at Mr. Van Cleeker's?"

"The same," rejoined the detective, calmly. "*The Tomtit and Moses Oran are one!*"

"Oh, God! Impossible!" ejaculated Lord Lenox, excitedly. "You speak without knowledge; you cannot prove it. Degraded as my brother was, he never would have allied himself with thieves and vagabonds."

Mr. Detective Duffy gazed at him in profound astonishment.

"It is your brother, then?"

"A relative," replied Lord Lenox, coloring. "But tell me more. Where heard you this? 'Tis evil report; I never will believe it."

"Mr. Choler, Oran, or whatever your name may be, this burglar chief, this bold outlaw, who recently murdered several of our police, and escaped from justice, is Moses Oran, from Manchester, England. I know it to my cost."

Lord Lenox buried his face in his hands; then slowly resuming his old position, he inquired, in a calmer tone—

"You know the family—you have heard of them, or else you could have never been acquainted with this?"

"I know of the family," returned the detective, gloomily; "at least, of this Moses Oran, who once deeply wronged me. I thought it worse; but, thank God! I was mistaken. What years of mental suffering have been mine; fierce, restless, devouring passion; call it revenge, if you will, and yet I was but pursuing a phantom."

It was Lord Lenox's turn now to be surprised.

"He wronged you, then?"

"He!" repeated Duffy. "I never knew what injustice was till that man crossed my path."

"Injustice!"

"Aye, injustice. Before I ever saw him I was a happy, prosperous man."

Mr. Duffy bowed his head, with strong internal emotion.

"Come, my friend," said Lord Lenox, kindly, "let us understand each other better; I perceive we are both somewhat connected with this strange history. If there is a mystery, let us, for Heaven's sake, unravel it at once."

"I will assist you to disentangle it," returned the detective. "This Moses Oran, whom you supposed dead, *is my most unhappy son-in-law!*"

"*What!*" ejaculated the astonished nobleman, "*Philip Mandon?*"

"I am that person," returned the detective, sadly. "For the last twenty years I have lived in this world, animated with no other wish but vengeance. Little did I dream, when I took young Oran into my counting-house, and extended to him the hospitalities of my own home, that I was introducing a serpent that was to sting me for my kindness. I had but one child—a beautiful, fair-haired creature—and before I was aware she became violently attached to him. During a brief absence from home they eloped, and not until then did I discover the dishonesty of my clerk. He had been in the habit of using large sums of my own at the gambling table, and in this way forging some notes of mine, had utterly ruined me. The next thing I heard was the desertion and suicide of my dear girl. From that moment, I was a changed being. A restless, fierce desire to seek out the wretch who had betrayed her, seemed to absorb every other feeling. For several years I could not discover traces of him, till finally I heard he had started a formidable association of burglars. With the resolution of finding him, I dropped my name, and assumed the calling of a detective. On one occasion, in my hunt after the famous nest of the burglars, I came near being assassinated by the very one whom I had so earnestly sought. Miraculously escaping, I made an attempt to find the place again; but the scoundrel easily thwarted me. The strangest part of my history remains to be told. In an accidental manner I learnt that I have been laboring under a strange mistake, and that Moses was in reality married to Leonora."

"And how did you discover this?" inquired Lord Lenox, eagerly.

The detective proceeded to give a succinct outline of Mrs. Lobens' revelations.

"Where does this woman live?" inquired Lord Lenox. "The information may lead to the discovery of young Osborne."

"Who?" inquired the detective, with a sudden flash of thought.

"Osborne—the name of the boy."

"I have it!" suddenly exclaimed Philip Manden, exultantly. "Can it be possible? Yes—that very boy is now in jail!—the son of Leonora!"

"Ha!" rejoined Lord Lenox, with almost as much excitement portrayed in his countenance; "are you certain?"

"Perfectly," returned Mr. Mandon. "This same one, I recollect, saved me from a tragical death. He told me then his name, and disavowed all connection or sympathy with the gang."

Lord Lenox suddenly rose from his chair, and paced the room hurriedly.

"I visited him yesterday," continued Philip Mandon, "and was struck, the moment I saw him, with the strong resemblance to my daughter. The eyes, the mouth, the nose, the expression vividly recalled poor Leonora. There is no doubt whatever that he is your nephew, if you really are a brother of Moses Oran's."

"I am," returned Lord Lenox, with a dignified wave of his hand. "I had hoped that my unhappy and misguided brother was long since dead. Bad as I knew him to be, I never suspected him to be so low and worthless. But these are wonderful developments. Why is young Oran in jail?"

"A train of circumstances, peculiar and novel, has placed him there. But he will soon be cleared, as his integrity has been fully proved."

"I'm glad to hear it," returned Lord Lenox. "One villain in a family is quite enough. But where is my most unfortunate brother?"

"He has escaped back, probably, to his old haunt—a rendezvous in the wilds of Pennsylvania, so situated as to defy search. "Did you never hear of the Burglars' Nest?"

"Since my residence here I have," returned the nobleman. "Is it then so inaccessible and difficult of approach?"

"Nothing could be more so. For years the locality has been unknown, until, a month ago, I accidentally stumbled upon it. Young Osborne tells me that he can easily guide me there."

"I have just thought," observed Lord Lenox, musingly, "of a plan to capture Moses, without the intervention of the regular authorities; then to prevail upon him to leave the country. Now that you know that he really did not wrong your daughter, you will not surely hesitate to join me in a scheme to save the honor of our family. Oh, God! is it possible that a brother of mine is a burglar—a common thief——"

"Villain as he has showed himself to be, for Leonora's child's sake, I will aid you in this scheme," returned Philip Mandon. "I agree with you that the matter should be hushed up."

"Instant measures must be taken for the release of young Oran. The boy, you say, is not implicated in this affair?"

"Not in any way or shape," returned Mr. Mandon, earnestly. "On the contrary, he gave the important information which entrapped the burglars at the Van Cleeker House. The only object of the authorities in keeping him confined is, to preserve him from the vindictive fury of the burglar chief, who has emissaries sworn to assassinate him. But it is getting late, and I can stay no longer. To-morrow I will see you again."

"If you will meet me at eleven o'clock," said Lord Lenox, we will proceed to the jail, and take measures for the release of the heir. I will see to his safety."

With a few other remarks that have no important bearing on our story, the two separated for the night; and let us, meanwhile, return to Osborne.

Our hero was not so closely confined as he had previously been. He occupied a little, pleasant room in the rear part of the prison, which was tolerably furnished; and his kind friend, the detective, provided him with books and papers, and had occasionally visited him.

It may be said that new existence was dawning on the hitherto reckless youth. He beheld life in a different view, as a scene of probation and usefulness. It is evident that the mind when neglected draws erroneous conclusions of its own destiny; and in proportion as it is encouraged, it is tinged with a glow of emulation, and a sense of its own creative powers. Osborne, while he was apparently alone in the world, adopted the theory that life is a combination of accidents, which may make us or mar us; now he saw the fallacy of his past reasonings, and wondered that he could look on the world as he had.

The afternoon following the interview of Lord Lenox with Mr. Mandon, Osborne was restlessly walking his little prison-house, thinking of Fanny, and drawing a number of very pretty pictures of the future, when he heard voices in the passage, and in another moment the door was unlocked, and the detective entered.

"My dear boy!" exclaimed Mr. Mandon, advancing and embracing him, "I have joyful news for you. Your relatives have found you out at last."

"Oh! is it true, Mr. Duffy?"

"I am Mr. Duffy no longer, the detective no longer; call me grandfather," said Mr. Philip Mandon, drawing the wondering youth closer to him. "Oh! Leonora, your image is stamped on this boy."

"My mother!" murmured Osborne, faintly. Objects seemed to swim around; he grew dizzy with the bewildering truth announced.

"Yes, your mother," returned Mandon. "I had her picture, which I grieve to say is lost; but you, my dear boy, are the very image of her."

Osborne took from his pocket the miniature, and handed it silently to the detective.

"Boy, 'tis her's, keep it," said he, handing it back; "let it be a talisman to preserve you from evil influences. When you look on the face of your sainted mother, you can never do wrong. It will drive away those evil spirits, that ever watch to lead us astray in the heyday of our youth!"

"Grandfather, something told me that it was my angel mother, the moment I first beheld it. She is in heaven!"

"So she is, I trust," returned the old man, solemnly. "Her pure and gentle spirit could never find rest except in those bright realms of love."

"My father—is he living?"

"Your father is living," returned Mr. Mandon, calmly, "and you have seen him."

"Where, oh, tell me where?" said Osborne, with eager vehemence.

"You must not know now; it would shock you too greatly. He is unworthy of any love you may have for him."

It seemed like a dream to that simple youth to hear these revelations;—the detective his own grandfather!

Little by little the old gentleman opened to his wondering grandchild the sad history of his life.

"And now," concluded Mr. Mandon, after he had announced to him the astounding intelligence of his being the heir to the Oran estate, "come with me, and you will be introduced to your guardian."

"I must be dreaming, surely," thought our hero, as he followed his grandfather, and entered with him a hack. "Heir to wealth, connection with a family so great; oh, it is a delusive dream, that is stealing over and cheating me now!"

The carriage drove on and stopped before the residence of the late Job Tarleton, and on being ushered into the library, Osborne recognized a handsome, dignified gentleman advancing towards him, who gave him a most substantial shake of the hand, and called him nephew. Then Lord Lenox revealed his true name, and led him pleasantly into the dining-room, and introduced him to an old gentleman, and afterwards to a young lady, in low-necked, blue silk, whose very blushing and joyous countenance resembled Fanny Van Cleeker's; and Osborne thought that the dream was growing more lifelike, when an hour afterwards the little maiden's hand was in his own, and her musical voice sounded like fairy music in his ear.

CHAPTER XXX.

WINDING UP.

Colin Goodwin, since the eventful afternoon of the meeting with Osborne, had often thought of his missing friend and wondered and speculated as to his probable fate.

The incident connected with his disappearance was duly communicated to Mr. Goodwin, who, in turn, related it to Squire Darley, and all arrived at the very natural conclusion that the young stranger had fallen a victim to the suspicious fury of the burglars.

One November morning, the honest old farmer was busily engaged, with the assistance of his men, in hauling to the outhouse a quantity of logs. Colin, with his coat off, was rendering vigorous assistance.

"It looks like snow, hurry up, boys," said the farmer.

"It has commenced already," remarked Colin, gazing up at the sky.

"So it has," cried the farmer, as a few flakes fell on his coat sleeve. "Work away, boys."

The men went at it with animation, and had nearly completed their task, when Colin heard the clattering of horses' hoofs on the road, and looking up, discovered three gentlemen on horseback rapidly approaching. Hardly had they reined up before the house, when Colin's quick eye recognized a familiar face and form. With a glad shout of surprise he rushed towards him, and in another moment he was in Osborne's cordial embrace.

"I never expected to see your face again," said Colin, surveying him with genuine delight. "What prevented you from meeting me that time? How many adventures you must have to relate!"

"Hundreds," replied Osborne, with a proud glow in his countenance; "but, Colin, just now we've no time to talk about them, for our business is urgent and important. Here's your old friend, Mr. Duffy."

Farmer Goodwin now came forward with a hearty welcome.

Mr. Choler was introduced, then Osborne, and in a few minutes the whole party were on the most friendly terms.

Farmer Goodwin had not heard of the capture of the burglars before, and listened to the recital with great interest. His men were anxious to start for the Nest, on learning that Osborne was acquainted with the route.

"It wears the appearance of very rough weather," observed the farmer, for it was now snowing fast, "and we might run a risk of losing our way.

"I do not think so," returned Osborne. "We are in no danger of losing our way. My advice is to start at once; the snow will prevent me from guiding you there at all; if we wait but a single day, our labor will be in vain."

"If that's the case, let us start at once," said Colin.

The rest of the party seemed to be of the same opinion, and active preparations were at once made.

Squire Darley was sent for, and soon arrived in a breathless state of excitement.

"Osborne," whispered Lord Lenox, taking him aside, "there is no necessity for so many going. It will defeat my own plans. I wish, if possible, to capture the burglar chief, and preserve my honor."

"I should like to gratify you," returned Osborne, "but if I prevent any from going there would be general dissatisfaction. It is but to humor them. If you do not wish them on the spot, it is easy to keep them outside—leave everything to me."

Before starting, one of the young men proposed choosing a captain. The motion was agreed to, and Osborne was unanimously elected.

The little band was now ready to start, and their young guide led them on with confidence, and rapidly towards the Nest.

"Now, Osborne," observed Mr. Mandon, as they rode briskly on, "you are perfectly satisfied I hope, that you can find the Nest."

"Perfectly," returned Osborne. "I was only lost once, and that was in the 'Devil's Nook.'"

"Lost in the Devil's Nook?" repeated Darley, who had ridden up. "In the name of that arch fiend of darkness, how did you find your way out?"

Osborne briefly sketched out the principal facts referring to his adventure with the Tomtit on the occasion of following him to the cave.

"Could the cave be found again?"

"Very likely," returned Osborne, smiling. "*Stop, gentlemen!*"

They were all galloping on at a smart rate, when, struck by his sudden and singular gesture, they reined in their horses, and the wagon also paused.

"What is the matter?" eagerly inquired the young men.

"*Good Heavens!*" exclaimed Osborne, with his eyes rivetted in one direction, and his features plainly betraying astonishment, "this is most inexplicable and strange."

Silently motioning the surprised company to follow him, Osborne quietly turned his horse's head, and led them down the hill under a ledge of rocks.

It was a picturesque scene. The snow was falling fast and thick, and the horses and men were covered with a white mantle that gave them all a ghostly, weird appearance.

"Gentlemen," explained he, with an earnest glance towards the spot where they had just left, "where do you suppose you all are?"

"Not in the Devil's Nook, I hope!" exclaimed Darley. "I am prepared for any amount of adventure, but Heaven preserve us from that."

"No, not there, but somewhere still more surprising," replied Osborne. "*We are, incredible as it may appear, but a stone's throw from the famous Burglar's Nest!*"

"Nonsense, we haven't travelled six miles!" rejoined Darley, contemptuously.

"Well," returned Osborne, "I am confident I am not mistaken—Mr. Duffy step with me up that hill, and see if I am not correct."

Dismounting from their horses the two returned to the spot.

"Now look straight ahead, sir," said Osborne.

Philip Mandon did so, and sure enough, through the whirling snow-flakes he discerned the old gable roof, and antique form of the Tomtit's Nest—he could scarcely believe his own eyes.

"Strange enough," he muttered.

"You must surely have taken a roundabout way to reach it, observed Osborne, after a short silence.

"No doubt of it," rejoined Mandon, musingly, "these impenetrable, mazy paths are enough to confuse and perplex the most experienced."

"I was deceived as well as you," said Osborne. "I had not the slightest suspicion I was so near. I am glad, however, that I have found it out, for the snow is falling so fast I apprehended difficulty in recognizing my old landmarks. But let us rejoin our friends and arrange our plan of attack."

The confirmation of Osborne's statement created the liveliest excitement, and grasping their pistols, the whole party followed their young but experienced guide. He led them down a steep embankment, and each one plainly saw the "Nest," dimly looming up amidst the shower of snow-flakes.

No word was spoken. Silently they stepped over the snowy causeway; they drew nearer every moment, till they could almost fancy they distinguished objects from the windows gliding about; another pause, and with fingers on their lips they ascended the steps. Cautiously as they had advanced, the quick ear of Mr. Beg detected their approach. Hastily waking up his three surviving associates, the custodian of the "Nest" had barely time to warn them of their danger when, with a shout, the party rushed in.

The Tomtit and his three followers stood like tigers at bay, glaring at their foes.

There was a momentary pause as the two parties confronted each other.

It is impossible to depict the malignant rage and fury that burned in every feature of the Tomtit.

"Let no blood be shed, if possible," spoke Lord Lenox, calmly; "and, above all, let no one injure that man!"

"Curse your mercy! I want it not!" gasped the burglar. "Traitor! young imp of darkness!" he continued, suddenly fixing his eye on Osborne with a revengeful scowl, "meet with the traitor's doom!"

His pistol was raised—his finger was on the lock—when Lord Lenox suddenly exclaimed:

"*Moses Oran!* would you kill your son?"

"*Son!*" repeated the Tomtit, hoarsely, the weapon was half lowered, then raised again with unsteady aim.

But just at the critical moment one of Goodwin's men gallantly rushed forward and knocked up the weapon. The movement was his last, for the infuriated burglar turned upon him and ran him through the heart!

He fell and expired without a groan, and the battle commenced in real earnest. The contest was short but terrific. Snag, shot in his remaining eye, was instantly killed; Molecat tumbled over him, a lifeless corpse; and the Tomtit himself lay stretched on the ground, the blood streaming from two gaping wounds.

Mr. Beg, the only survivor, now threw himself on his knees, and begged piteously for mercy.

"Don't shoot him!" exclaimed Lord Lenox, for he recognized his face instantly as his father's old steward; but the order came too late: Goodwin's men, infuriated by the murder of their comrade, simultaneously discharged their weapons at his breast; and, with a fearful shriek, the wretched custodian of the Burglars' Nest dropped lifeless beside his comrades!

The Tomtit still breathed; and by Lord Lenox's desire he was brought into the adjoining chamber, and laid on a pallet. Closing the door, the lordly brother knelt alone beside the dying outlaw, and as he bent over him, his lips moved in silent prayer. It was a solemn and affecting spectacle.

Slowly the dark spirit passed into Eternity, unconscious that Christian Love was mourning over the wreck.

* * * * * * *

Ten years have gone by. Let us turn again to the "Burglars' Nest." The old, quaint, gable roofed house has disappeared, and on its site may be seen a pretty cottage with a spacious garden attached, where, every summer, Osborne and his sweet little wife do hie to pay their homage of respect and love to one whose home it is. Good Philip Mandon lives in this quiet way, serene and happy, welcoming the annual visits of his grand-children, and attendant little sprites and fairies, who, with their shouts of noisy glee, make him young again.

And Mrs. Platt is there, a sprightly old lady still, who thinks the Bible the best and truest history that was ever written, and never wearies talking of its beauties.

And Osborne often, in looking around the old spot, feels a momentary shade of gloom, as he thinks over the scenes of the past, and one dark shadow passes before him; but when his heart is saddened by the thought of his unhappy father's degradation and crimes, the face of his sainted mother dispels the clouds, and fills his soul with the serene sunshine of peace.

THE END.

THE LATE REWARD.

"Every one that asketh, receiveth."

Jonas Selwin stood by the death-bed of his sister Mary, from which her spirit had just taken its everlasting flight. He was the prodigal son, the brother for whom the dear saint just departed had labored, and suffered, and prayed, all the days of her life, and with no other *apparent* success than to see him grow worse and worse. In return for her love and care, he had studied out ways to distress and mortify her. As a reward for all her generous and self-denying assistance, he had deliberately wrung her heart in every way he could think of. It had been one long rendering of evil for good for over thirty years. But now it was over. Mary was where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

With such courage and faith as she could summon, Mary had resolved to devote herself to the work of saving him.

Several times Mary had procured situations for her brother, in which his chance to rise was very good, if he but proved himself worthy; but he invariably disappointed all her hopes, and made his condition worse than it was before. Bitterly, bitterly did the poor woman groan and weep over her wicked brother. She would not have minded that he kept her so very poor; she would not have minded that he caused her to toil beyond her health; ~~she would not have~~ minded, *so much*, that he even *strove* to conduct himself in the most ungrateful manner towards her, had it not been for his own sake.

It is one of the great mercies of God that he allows his servants to protect, by their prayers, the friends over whose destiny they have otherwise no control.

But the years rolled on, and there was no *visible* token that the prayers of Mary had ever been heard in behalf of her brother. She had made good friends. She was a loved and respected inmate of a pious family. As housekeeper and manager-in-chief of all in-door affairs—for the mistress of the family was an invalid for life—Mary passed a useful, if not a happy life. She was comfortable and peaceful—when she could rise out of the chronic anguish caused by her wicked and thankless brother.

Jonas, now given over as past hope by all save his sister, had been forbidden the house; but at times, when very much intoxicated, he would come and demand admittance.

On these occasions poor Mary would become so sick with the wo at her heart that she would be obliged to take to her bed, and sometimes she was not able to rise for two days.

When she came from her room, her pale face would be more pale than was its wont, and her great, heavy eyes would look so large and hollow that it was enough to scare one to see them. She would look so weary, too, so utterly tired of the world and life, that it made all our hearts ache for her, and we *wondered* why God did not appear for the relief of one who was so truly humble and good. But Mary's fate was suffering to the very end.

It was going out in a drenching rain to see to Jonas, who had fallen dead drunk in the muddy street, that gave Mary the cold, which in a few weeks finished her life of trouble and pain.

When Jonas heard that she was dangerously sick, he was for once frightened, and started from the place where he had gone to procure a job, to return to her town. He had not a cent of money, for he had spent all he had—and Mary had given it to him—to reach there, so he had to return on foot, and it took him several days. He begged his food sometimes, and sometimes went without any.

He reached the house too late to see his sister alive; but to the day of his death he declared that he met her spirit at the door. When on one occasion, he was told that it was the spirit *in* him which caused him to see the spirit without, he replied that such was not the case, as he had not taken a drop for three days.

When the eyes of Jonas fell upon the wasted form upon the bed, he flung himself on his knees and groaned aloud, and cried, and cursed himself, and called on her to come back—to forgive him. "Jonas," said a stern voice; "don't ask her to return to be abused and broken hearted any longer. It is better to love the living, man, than to wail for the dead."

"I never meant to kill her—I——" but we will not follow out this scene; but it is a pleasure to say that never from that hour did a drop of intoxicating liquor pass the lips of Jonas. Now that his devoted sister was dead, he felt that it was not because he had not loved her that he had abused her so. "I was possessed of the devil," he said; "I know I was, or never could I have done it. Never shall I know peace. There can be no forgiveness for me."

But there *was* forgiveness even for Jonas. His vision of his sister's parting spirit, as he had seen (or imagined) it on that fatal night, haunted him evermore, and he *dared not* go on in his evil ways. Nor did he *wish* to. The memory of all his sister's entreaties returned upon him with resistless force, and he became a good man, and cherished as a holy thing the memory of the faithful sister whose life he had made bitter as wormwood.

THE MEETING.

BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

Ah would that our first meeting, Isabel,
After thy absence of long months, had been
Not in this scene of mirth and revelry,
But in thy lovely home, or in the deep
Unbroken solitude of some old wood
Beneath the blue and starry canopy,
And then our greeting should have been a kiss,
As soft and sweet and lingering as a strain
Of music borne at midnight o'er the waves,
Or as a thought of love in gentle hearts.

We will not dance, dear Isabel, to-night.
Bright forms are glancing by us, and the tones
Of wit and mirth are ringing in our ears;
But these can have no charms for us. I know
That holier chords are trembling in our breasts
Than they could ever thrill. Come, dear one, come,
And let us for a few brief moments rove
Mid the sweet mazes of yon golden walk,
Where the young Rose, (the Queen of flowers, as thou
Of girls) bright with its coronal of dew,
Will bow to thee its jewelled head, and where
The water lily floating on the wave,
Nature's bright swan-flower, will gaze up at thee
As we gaze up at yonder burning stars.
The breeze's soft, cool fingers and mine own
Will toss the ringlets of thy golden hair;
The breeze's gentle lips and mine will breathe
Low murmurs in thy ear; and there our hearts,
Forgetting this wild, heartless dance, will waltz
Together to the music of our souls.

A MEXICAN BULL-FIGHT.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

One of the most popular, exciting, and fashionable *amusements* of the Mexicans, and in fact of the Spanish race generally, is the bull-fight. Every place of note has its arena of contest; and from the President of the Republic, the Governor of a Provence, the Priest of the Church, down through every rank and grade, to the poorest and lowest inhabitant, all alike participate in the barbarous sport with the wildest delight and enthusiasm.

Some years ago, while making a brief sojourn with the Governor of an eastern provence that shall be nameless—and to whom I had first paid my respects with a valuable letter of introduction, and from whom I had received every mark of hospitality and kindness—he one day said to me, with a perfect glow of delight:

"Don Alberto, I have glorious news for you! You have never seen a bull-fight, you tell me. On Wednesday next that pleasure will be yours. Everything is arranged—praised be the Virgin!"

"Glorious!" echoed Dona Flora, the daughter of my host, a beautiful girl of eighteen, clapping her hands with delight.

I looked at her in surprise, and wondered how it could be possible for so sweet and angelic a being as she seemed to be, to take any pleasure whatever in so barbarous a custom. I bowed to the Governor, however, thanked him in words for the information, but took the liberty of some mental moralizing that would have gained me no credit by a vocal expression.

The day came; and with the Governor and his suite, some three or four priests, and the ladies of his household, I repaired to the scene of sport. This was a large enclosure, with circular seats rising one above the other, and the whole covered with an awning. In the center was the arena, not unlike the ring of a circus, which the whole place somewhat resembled, though large enough to seat several thousand persons. The place was crowded with people when we arrived; the fighters were in the ring—three horsemen and three footmen, armed with lances and swords—and a respectable band of musicians were giving forth a national air. As we advanced to the highest seats, which of course had been reserved for such distinguished company, all eyes were directed toward us, and there was a general murmur of applause. As I took my appointed seat by the side of Dona Flora, that beautiful girl turned to me, and, with a flash of enthusiasm lighting up her bright, girlish face, said, pointing to the men in the ring:

"Are they not all splendid-looking fellows, Don Alberto? With what grace and dignity the horsemen sit their noble steeds! and with what an air of modest self-reliance and unflinching courage the footmen await the onset of their fearful enemy!"

"They are all fine-looking fellows, I will not deny," returned I, as I ran my eye over their well-proportioned figures, and neatly rounded, tapering limbs; "but it seems to me they might be engaged in a better cause than the torturing of an unhappy animal."

I could scarcely avoid this open expression of my disapprobation of their unholy calling; but my remarks were ill-timed, and drew upon me a censorious look from my fair companion.

"Why, what would you have them do?" she replied, a little pettishly. "They cater for our amusement, and at the same time prove their courage and skill."

"I fear they will not *amuse* me," I rejoined; "and as for their courage and skill, I think they might display that to more advantage against the enemies of their country."

"You foreigners have such prejudices against our most pleasing sports!" she said, with a slight pout.

"Because we can see nothing pleasing in a dumb animal being tortured to death, or a man being suddenly hurled into eternity amid the plaudits of an unfeeling multitude!" retorted I. "Did you ever see a man killed in the arena, Señorita?"

"Oh, yes—two."

"And how did you feel?"

"I was very much excited—I experienced some very strange emotions."

"And you applauded the bull?"

"I believe I did the last one, Señor, it was a very furious animal."

"And did it occur to you then, that the poor fellow, over whose death you were rejoicing, had perhaps a doting mother, a dear sister, a loving wife and children to mourn his loss?"

"But, Señor," she rejoined, with an air of surprise, "it was his profession; it was this very risk he was paid for while living; and if he was unfortunate, it was not our fault. It was a very gallant bull, Señor."

I saw it was useless to argue the point with one who, though fair, gentle, and sympathetic in every thing else, had been educated to consider the death of a fellow creature in the bull-ring as only an interesting part of the performance for which the audience had paid; and happily the cessation of the music at this moment, and a sort of breathless hush of expectation throughout the house, allowed me to remain silent also.

The Governor now waved his hand, as a signal for the sport to begin; and almost instantly a door in one side of the ring was thrown open, and a large, fierce bull, with reddish, wicked looking eyes, came madly bounding into the arena. In the centre he stopped for a moment, and glared around upon the applauding spectators; and then, his eye falling upon one of the horsemen, he lowered his head, with an angry shake uttered a savage bellow, and made a most furious, and, as I believed, fatal charge. In fact, as his bent head came within a few feet of the horse, I would almost have wagered my life that the latter could not have escaped being gored, whatever might be the fate of his rider; but even while I held my breath, with a sickening shudder, the equine beast, spurred and guided by the skillful *picador*, slightly reared, wheeled, and sprung aside, and the bull passed harmlessly by, receiving an irritating and bloody spear-thrust in his left flank.

A wild burst of applause astonished the poor bull, and encouraged the horseman, who bowed to the compliment. The next moment the furious animal bounded at another horseman, who also managed by great skill to avoid the thrust of his horns, and prick him with his lance. Another burst of applause. The bull now made another charge at the first horse, but wheeled suddenly and unexpectedly upon the third, and gored him on the hind quarter, yet did not succeed in throwing him down. As the horse, spurred by his rider, leaped forward, one of the footmen bounded up and shook a red flag in the very face of the bull. As the latter rushed at him, he darted aside, and, with a sharp *machete*, cut him across the nose; and as the bull again turned upon him, he fairly sprung upon the back of the dangerous animal, cut him right and left along the ribs, and reached the ground unharmed. At this exciting display of dexterous skill, the whole place shook with thunders of applause, and the Governor and several of the priests exclaimed:

"It was well done! it was well done!"

"Oh, was it not delightful?" cried Dona Flora, clapping her small, white hands.

"Very!" said I.

Meantime the bull never stopping to make his obeisance, and seemingly determined that his human foes should not, kept madly rushing at one and another, each of whom eluded him with a dexterity worthy of a better cause; and as each continued to prick and goad him on every side, he was soon covered with blood from a hundred trifling wounds. This brutal course was pursued until the poor animal began to grow weak and weary, and, in sheer desperation, at length stopped in the centre of the ring, panting and lolling, and uttering a low, mournful bellow.

My heart now really ached with compassion for the poor brute, which had only carried out the instincts of his nature, against the baser propensities of his human assailants, who had degraded themselves from the high estate of rational, immortal beings, to even a lower level than his own; but I think I do justice to that audience when I say, that, out of the thousands there assembled, I do not believe there was another soul who felt the least sympathy for that tormented animal.

"Poor bull!" exclaimed one, with a laugh of derision.

"How do you feel now, old short-horns?" cried another.

"Try it again, Señor Bellower, and get your ugly throat cut for your pains?" shouted a third.

This last sally of wit was greeted with boisterous laughter.

"Gallantly done, my men!" said the Governor.

"The work goes on well!" exclaimed a lady.

"What do you think of the sport by this time, Señor?" inquired my fair companion.

"I think I will not express any opinion just yet," I replied, evasively.

One of the footmen now ran up to the bull, and, catching him by the tail, gave it a violent pull one side, almost throwing him down. This proceeding, which was greeted with yells of laughter, set the animal again in motion, with another burst of fury; and wheeling suddenly upon his tormentor, he caught him by one of his horns, and tossed him over his head. The man alighted upon his feet, and ran limping away, while one of his companions thrust forward his red flag and drew the attack of the animal upon himself. This time I confess I applauded the bull.

Another, long, fatiguing, and to me disgusting scene of attack and defence, now took place, and ended at last in the weary beast drawing off one side, against the wall of the ring, and hanging down his head, his whole body covered with blood and wounds.

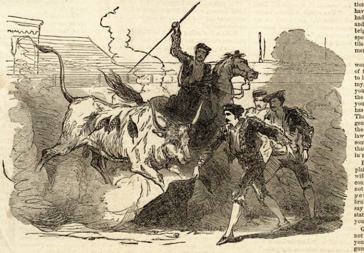
"Surely they will kill him now, and put him out of his misery?" said I, to my fair companion.

"Oh, no—the sport is not over yet!" she replied; "there is still fight in the beast, as you shall see."

And to the shame of humanity, I confess I did see; for after a short breathing spell by the fighters, one of them approached and pricked the dying animal several times with his lance; and as the poor beast took no notice of this, another went up, caught hold of his tail, and twisted it with all his might. The bull uttered another low bellow of pain, that fairly touched my heart, but declined to move from his tracks. At this a third came forward with a large bundle of squibs and crackers fastened to short, sharp, bearded wires, prepared for the purpose, and began to stick them into the flesh of the beast, commencing with the head and neck, and continuing over the back and sides, till the animal was literally covered with them; and still the poor brute remained passive and indifferent, with drooping head and lolling tongue. Next a horseman with a lighted taper affixed to his lance, rode up to within a few feet, and deliberately set fire to these combustibles; and as they began to smoke, hiss, blaze, sparkle and crackle, the dying animal raised his head, in surprise and alarm, glared fiercely around him for a moment, shook himself, uttered a wild, dismal bellow, thrust out his red and bloody tongue, reeled faintly, and seemed about to fall; but suddenly concentrating all his remaining strength and energies into one fierce, final desperate effort, he made a plunge forward, with such velocity that there was not time for the nearest horseman to clear him, and down went the steed, with his rider beneath him. The next moment the horse was ripped open to the entrails, amid shouts of laughter and thunders of applause.

In order to draw off the bull, and so permit the man beneath the horse to be extricated, one of the footmen, a young, active fellow, now ran up to the goring beast, which was one blaze of hissing and crackling fireworks, and shook his red flag in his very face; and as the savage beast wheeled upon him in turn, he darted aside, and attempted to retreat backwards, still holding the red flag before him, and preparing to give the *coup de grace* in a manner to reflect lasting credit upon his skill. But by some unlucky chance his foot slipped at the critical moment, and, before he could recover his equilibrium, the horns of the enraged animal were buried in his body. As if struck with a battering-ram, he was hurled backward upon the ground, and the dying bull, too weak to recover himself, pitched forward upon him, head first, and literally pinned him to the earth.

There was a momentary hush throughout the house, but more, as it seemed, of surprise than horror. Then a wild, piercing shriek broke the silence, and a pale, delicate woman, from one of the lower benches, leaped frantically into the ring, ran forward with upraised hands, and threw herself down by the dying man, exclaiming:



"My husband! my husband! my dear, dear husband!"

They raised her up, white as a sheet, and senseless, and bore her away. They raised up her husband, a ghastly, gasping, and bloody spectacle, and bore him away also. They killed the bull, and, putting ropes around him, dragged him from the ring. They righted the fallen horseman, and dragged his dead horse from the ring likewise. And the band played, and the people applauded.

"What next?" said I to Dona Flora.

"Another bull," she answered.

"God forgive you all!" ejaculated I. "Excuse me—a thousand pardons for my rudeness—but I am compelled to leave you abruptly!"

I waited for no rejoinder, but starting up, and bowing to the Governor, I hurried from the slaughter-house to the open air, solemnly vowing I would never voluntarily witness another bull-fight. And through ridicule and censure that vow I have sacredly kept to this day.

ANOTHER TIME

BY ALICE CARY.

Wind of the sweet southwest,
Blow, and blow, and blow!
Like a cradle pillow sunny with curls,
Make each patch of snow.

In the face of the winter, breathe,
And waste his stubborn pride,
And make the spring like a lady
With her shadow, by his side.

Like a heart that has no love in it,
The time is hollow and cold,
And I long to see the daisy push
Her fingers out of the mold.

I long for the flowers to interpret
The thoughts which I cannot sing—
And the soul within me cries and cries,
Oh for the Spring, the Spring!

Blow, and bring her, flushed with love,
Over the salt sea brine,—
Over the beds of the barren rocks,
And the hills with their spurs of pine.

Like a little child that is lost
In a strange and starless land,
And feels through the dark and finds the dark,
And not its mother's hand;

I am lost, and feeling through the dark
In helpless pain and fear,
I cry, and make believe 'tis all
For another time of year.

UNKNOWN YET WELL KNOWN.

Did you never meet persons whom your heart recognizes instantly? Not because they are handsome, or graceful, or well-costumed, because from these signal flags of disappointment you have so often turned away, that they are more likely to repel than attract you. I allude to a spiritual, not a physical magnetism. A mournful soul perhaps, looking from out the window of the eye, challenging your sympathy with mute eloquence as you pass. Or—if your own soul is unquiet and restless, and vexed with the world's fever, the soothing presence in a crowd, of a strange face, placid and pure as that of infancy. Or you hear a voice, deep and heart-toned, and turn instinctively in the crowd to look for its owner, who by that unmistakable token, you are sure has a soul, and as you listen, the sound cheers you like the sunlight. And yet we ignorantly call such "strangers." Strangers! what though neither know the earthly name by which we are called, when *such* things can be; when for that brief instant in some public place, both listening to some noble sentiment from a great souled speaker, one filling eye accidentally meets another, and the same heart-pulses are stirred, or we smile simultaneously at what pleases each, without remembering that we have "not been introduced." What matters it that we never meet again? for that moment, at least, have not our *souls* spoken? Daily I meet faces in my walks, which move me to pity or love, as I read there whole histories, and sometimes when I think how short is our life, I grow impatient at the fetters "propriety" has forged. When I move on at nightfall, toward the glancing lights of "home," passing those of my own sex to whom that word, with all its sweet associations, is terrible as death, my heart aches, if they look at me, lest they should think there is no pity for them in it. I long to say, by so much as home is sacred to me, by just so much can I—a woman—measure your mocking present, and—alas for christianity!—your despairing future. And so, though my unwilling feet "pass by on the other side," my sorrowful pity follows, and would fain redeem them.

Sometimes as I pass along, I see the business man going to his home, and my heart moves toward him, if he hold between his fingers with his cherished evening paper or book, a little bunch of flowers; because so well I know a woman's heart, and the power of "little things" to soothe, or pain it. And when I see two little strange, toddling babies, meet on the pavement, run up to each other, and laughing a little musical laugh, touch lips and pass on, as if life were made for love and them, I am sorry that I ever grew up.

FANNY FERN.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Three Clerks.—You young men of the interior seem to think that when there is little to do you can get employment in the seaboard cities more readily than elsewhere. Those who act upon such a supposition now, will make a great mistake. Almost all our merchants and manufacturers are curtailing their establishments more or less, and numbers of clerks and skilled operatives, thrown out of employment, are leaving for the country in the hope of lessening their expenses, at least, if they cannot find work. There are positively no openings for fresh comers, or except for such as may have been specifically engaged beforehand. Nothing could be more unwise than to come to this city for the purpose of "taking the chances" of employment. There are no chances to take. Haunts of dissipation yawn for the idle in every street, but no "situations." Those who have a little money had better husband it and wait patiently for brighter times, than spend it here in a futile search for employment.

Silverhead.—It would be a great piece of folly for you to go to law with your enemy, simply because you believe you have the moral right on your side, while he has all the facts on his. The "moral right" generally goes with the "facts," and the law has a troublesome crotchet of going that way, too, except in rare cases.

B. R. E.—You complain to us of your wife in a way that convinces us she is not at fault, and that *you* are a coarse brute. Thus much we say in reply without stating the cause of your complaint.

Gertrude.—If it is not *unhealthy* for a young lady to chew gum-arabic, it is vulgar and disgusting.

Little Girl.—Our little correspondent wonders how they can make a whole paper of pins, and stick them so nicely in rows, for sixpence. Her mother, she says, has "put her up to asking the Ledger about it." Well, the secret is, that they make them very fast, and thousands at a time. Pins are made of brass wire, and pass through fourteen processes before they are ready for sale. First, the wire has to be made perfectly straight, and cut into pieces long enough to make three or four pins. This is done by machinery which works so rapidly that one man can straighten and cut wire enough in one day, to make two hundred thousand pins. Then the wires have to be cut into proper lengths, pointed, headed, whitened, polished and put in papers; all of which things are done by ingenious machinery that enables one man to do more than a thousand could do without machinery. Even the holes in the papers are pricked by machinery. In sticking the pins into the papers children are employed, who get such a knack at it that each of them can stick three thousand in an hour, or fifty in a minute. In this way pins are made so cheap, that, by wholesale, you can buy more than a hundred and fifty for one cent.

J. S.—The best thing for you to do, for the purpose of carrying out your idea of learning to speak and write German, French, Spanish and Italian, would be to set energetically at work under a competent teacher, and master the rudiments of those languages as soon as possible. You should also continue your daily, practical study of them, in an industrious and practical manner, and not waste your time on impractical theories and dreams of a "universal language." The new-fangled teachers who talk so glibly of the "philosophy of speech," and like emptinesses, never make good linguists of their pupils. Select for your teacher some thorough old fellow, who believes in nothing but downright hard work, and who deals in no nonsense, and you will soon find yourself making satisfactory progress.

Jabez.—Your debating club has fallen into the too common error of unduly magnifying agriculture over and above all other arts. There has been an immense deal of bucolic blatancy vociferated to this effect in times past, but the day has come when such nonsense should be allowed to drop. The mechanic arts, to which we are indebted for the safety and facilities of travel, the comforts of dress and habitations, and nearly all the elegancies of life, are certainly of as much consequence as the art of agriculture. This last is, in fact, to a great degree dependent upon the other arts for its means of development. The truth is, that the principal arts whereby life is sustained, and comfort and health promoted, are about equally important.

Baal.—Your notion of making a fortune, by travelling a year or so in Palestine and writing a book on the Holy Land, is a most chimerical and unbusinesslike one. Palestine has been done to death by travellers, and it would probably be impossible for you to say anything new on the subject, or to set forth old things in such a new and striking way as to make a fortune by so doing. In fact, a fortune is not an easy thing to make in any country, or by any undertaking.

M. M.—This correspondent, who is a young lady, enters into the discussion of the "2 times 2" question with much spirit. She takes the "*are*" side, and thinks that anybody who advocates the idea that "2 times 2 *is* 4" is a correct expression, must be totally ignorant of the first principles of grammar. She writes well, and argues well, and calls upon the *is*-ites to advance something logical, sensible and grammatical on their side of the question—"if they *can* do it."

Luther.—Nothing can ever justify persecution for religious opinion's sake. It is nevertheless a fact, Mr. Luther, that a man who avows religious opinions radically different from those of the community in which he lives, will usually be distrusted and disliked. A man so situated, if he wishes to lead a pleasant life with his neighbors, must do one of two things, namely—hold his tongue or make proselytes enough to keep him company.

Minnie.—Ought my schoolmates, asks Minnie, after having carelessly misplaced *their* books, to take mine from my desk, thus subjecting me to a reproof from my teacher? Certainly not, Minnie, and it is a false idea of honor in you to bear such charges without defending yourself from them, even at the risk of compromising your young companions. Truth and justice are the principal elements of true honor.

Tubal.—There were probably musicians of a rude kind before the flood. No tribe of savages, however sunk in ignorance and degradation, has ever been found who did not practice music of some kind. Even the Kalingalunga, or native New Hollanders, have their rude music, which they perform with an energy and vehemence worthy of the highest development of the Italian opera.

Melinda.—Your parents may be one-tenth wrong in the matter to which you refer, and you seem to be the other nine-tenths. A girl eighteen years of age, who permits her mother to do more work than she does herself, cannot very easily inspire us with confidence in any complaint she may make against her parents. Our advice to you is, to work more and complain less.

Henrico.—It is not difficult to clean the inside of decanters and bottles, provided you know how. Roll up small pieces of coarse brown paper into balls. Wet them, soap them, put them into the vessel with a little lukewarm water, and shake them well. After rinsing the vessel with clean water, it will be as clean and bright as when first made.

Ichabod is bowed down under the grievous burden imposed by a habit of incessant and greedy tobacco chewing, and in his misery cries out: "*Can* a young man leave off the vile habit?" Of course he can, Ichabod, if he has sufficient nerve and manliness to stick to a good resolution. All you have to do is to refrain from putting the tobacco in your mouth.

L. H. D.—Most of the black lead of commerce, comes from two deposits; one in Cumberland county England, and the other in Worcester county, Massachusetts. It is used for lead pencils, stove polish and crucibles. This valuable substance has been found in two places in New Jersey, and near Lake George in the State of New York, but neither of these beds has been worked to much extent.

Prometheus, (College of New Jersey.)—You were correct in asserting, in a debate, that the circulation of the Ledger is far larger than that of any daily or weekly paper in the country.

Sachem.—We do not believe in the romantic stories told of Indians; and we think that any white man who would permit his daughter to marry one is unfit to have the destiny of a child confided to his keeping.

Castor and Pollux.—It were a long story to tell all the causes of the war of 1812, but we can give you the immediate cause, or the last event in the chain of causes. It grew out of the gigantic contest waged between Napoleon and Great Britain. In 1806, when Napoleon was master of nearly all of the continent of Europe, England, unable to conquer him on the land, but mistress of the seas, declared the northern coast of Europe to be in a state of blockade, and enforced this declaration by mighty fleets. The commerce of the French empire was nearly suspended by this blockade, as no ship could leave or enter a northern port without imminent danger of capture and confiscation. Napoleon, upon being informed of this movement, retorted by declaring the British Isles to be in a state of blockade, thus prohibiting all trade and all communication with Great Britain. The British Government next issued an Order in Council forbidding *neutral vessels* to go from one French port to another, and making any vessel attempting to do so a "lawful prize." Soon after, another Order in Council was promulgated, which forbade any vessel of any nation to enter any port from which British vessels were excluded. These Orders in council tended to destroy the growing commerce of the United States, and led, first to remonstrances, then to retaliatory measures, and lastly, to the war of 1812. The decrees of Napoleon with regard to neutral vessels were just as arbitrary and unjust as the British Orders in Council, and, under the operation of those decrees, a large number of American vessels were taken and confiscated, for which General Jackson afterwards made the French government pay.

Gabriel.—Some time since, as Gabriel (our correspondent) was riding up town in an omnibus, who should get in but a young lady to whom he had been introduced, but had never seen since the introduction. After putting her hand into her pocket, she blushingly informed Gabriel that she had forgotten her purse, and politely requested him to pay her fare, which he accordingly did. A few evenings after, he met the young lady at the house of a friend, when she offered him six cents! "Now," asks Gabriel, "will you be kind enough to inform me what would have been the proper course for a bashful young man to pursue with regard to the acceptance thereof?" We answer, that he should have simply taken the money and put it into his pocket. The lady did perfectly right. If Gabriel were not so bashful, we might have suggested to him that, when accepting the money, he had a capital opportunity to achieve some jocular observations upon the importance of punctuality in the discharge of pecuniary obligations. He might have congratulated her upon her strict commercial principles, and gone on for ten minutes in a strain of remark that would have given the young lady the highest idea of his wit and vivacity, and laid the foundation for a lasting friendship. But whether he spoke or was silent, he should have taken the money without the slightest hesitation.

Bloomingdale.—We learn, from an authority learned in such matters, that the harness-blacking referred to by you is made in the following manner: Take of common yellow beeswax one ounce and a half; of mutton suet four ounces and a half; of turpentine half an ounce; of ivory black, three ounces. Melt the wax in a vessel over a fire; then add the suet and when both are melted, add the turpentine. Remove the mixture from the fire, gradually stir in the ivory black, and continue to stir and kneed the mass till it is cold. It is to be used with a brush in the ordinary way. This blacking is not only suitable for harness, but is said to be a most excellent water-proof blacking for boots and shoes. It contains nothing that can injure the leather, but, on the contrary, tends to its preservation, besides giving it a brilliant appearance.

Seraphina has blue eyes—handsome ones, too, "so she has been told." Still she is troubled, because she has read, somewhere, that blue eyes do not inspire love. This horrid theory keeps her awake nights, and is slowly undermining her happiness. She therefore puts the question, "*Do* blue eyes inspire love?" We think they do. Every eye has its victim *somewhere*. We fancy, however, that the *expression* of the eyes has much more to do in this matter than their *color*. We have seen what are called "colorless" eyes do a wonderful stroke of business in a very short time. Sometimes even an eye-*lid* does a man's business; and Solomon, in cautioning young men against a certain style of dangerous woman prevalent in his day, particularly warns them not to let her "take" them *with her eyelids*.

C. C. C.—The Travels of Baron Munchausen is a work of fiction, published in Germany in 1787. But though the work is fictitious, there was such a person as Baron Munchausen. He was a German officer in the Russian service, who, after serving for several campaigns in Turkey, brought home an astounding stock of such tales as travellers were accustomed to tell at that day, and which they could tell then without much fear of contradiction. Burger, the German author, hearing the Baron relate his adventures, conceived the idea of the work named above. He executed the burlesque with so much wit and tact that it had great success, and was translated into several languages. The object of the author was to ridicule the whole herd of lying travellers, a very numerous class in the last century.

E. E.—In England, public men are kept much longer in office than they are in this country. During the last dozen years, for instance, except in a few cases, the position of no public man in England has essentially changed, and no new man has emerged from obscurity and attained distinction. Lord Palmerston, Lord Brougham, Lord John Russell, the Earl of Derby, Lord Stanley, the Duke of Newcastle, Sir James Graham, Mr. D'Israeli, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Bright, Cobden, and others, hold about the same positions and influence in politics that they held ten years ago. These men all had to go through a long state of probation and discipline, before they were able to grasp the reins of government, and hence their tenacious hold on public power and popular influence.

Mrs. M. A. T., (Boston).—"I have seen it stated in the papers that A. T. Stewart, your great dry-goods merchant, was recently so delighted with one of Fanny Fern's articles in the Ledger, that after reading it he sent her one of the handsomest silk dresses in his store. Is this so? Did he really send her such a dress?" Although this is rather a personal matter, still we feel at liberty to say, in reply to this correspondent, that Mr. Stewart did send Fanny Fern a magnificent silk dress for the reason stated above.

Reader.—The senator was right with regard to the burning of Moscow to prevent its falling into the hands of Napoleon. The city was not entirely consumed, but not enough of it remained to afford a shelter for Napoleon's prodigious army. We believe that less than two-thirds of the houses were entirely destroyed. But the French army was so numerous, that the city, before it was burnt, was scarcely large enough for its accommodation. The fire, moreover, consumed vast quantities of provisions.

Harner asks: "Is it proper for Christian parents to encourage a warlike spirit in their children by giving them guns, swords and cannon for playthings?" Our correspondent begs the question. We are not yet prepared to admit that the possession of these playthings *does* encourage a warlike spirit. We think children use them with very little thought on the subject, as they would a ball, or a battledore and shuttlecock.

Sarah.—It does not follow that a woman is trivial and foolish, because she wears jewelry. Many ladies who are *born to jewels*, wear them without much if any reflection about them. Perhaps ladies who are *not born to them*, i. e., who do not receive them by inheritance as in the old countries, are more likely to have a passion for possessing and displaying them, on the principle that we always desire that which is difficult of attainment.

M. M.—For a man to borrow money of a woman, is justly considered a disgraceful act, which only very peculiar circumstances can excuse. We think you did wrong to send him the money he had the impudence to ask you for. A young man of the right stamp seldom needs such assistance; and when he does, he has always a friend of his own sex, who will take pleasure in giving it to him.

R.—The phrase "Upper Ten" is an abbreviation of "Upper Ten Thousand," an expression originally used by Mr. N. P. Willis to describe the class in New York who are supposed to constitute what is called "Society." There is an arithmetical truth in the phrase, as it appears from the New York tax lists that the entire real estate of the city is owned by about ten thousand persons.

Lothario.—You seem to imagine that you are the first lover who ever ran against any thorns in the rosy path of love. You are quite in error on this point. We all have to go through the same experience; and, the truth is, there would be little fun in the thing if we did not. So keep up your courage, and go ahead.

Thomas.—Your father has a right to speak of your faults before company, but we should say it is very unwise in him to do so. Perhaps, however, he thinks you have so often disregarded his *private* monition, that there is no other way except to bring you under the stress of public opinion. How is it?

H. L. H.—Judging from the "specimens" which you sent us, we think that you need have no fear of being injured by an undue degree of precocity. You are in no danger from such a cause. Your verses give assurance of absolute safety. There is not the slightest vestige of poetry in them.

⁂Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.